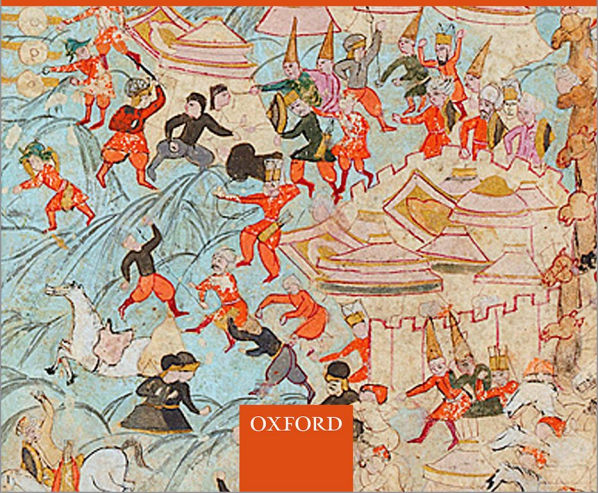




The Sultan's Renegades

*Christian-European Converts to Islam and the
Making of the Ottoman Elite, 1575–1610*

TOBIAS P. GRAF



OXFORD

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In memoriam

Hans Breusch, né Geist (1921–2013)

and

Rosel Breusch, née Fehlinger (1927–2008)

Preface

The project which has culminated in this book began with a series of what seemed to be simple enough questions to an undergraduate student about how prolonged exposure to Ottoman society, especially through captivity and slavery, affected the depictions of the ‘Turk’ in the early modern period. Did such experiences simply reinforce pre-existing negative stereotypes? Did they give rise to new ones? Or were those who returned home able to reflect in a more nuanced, perhaps even a positive way about their former captors and masters? Luckily, I had the opportunity to discuss my initial ideas with Metin Kunt (Istanbul) who, I soon realized, prevented me from going down a road already well travelled by other scholars. It was his initial stimulus which encouraged me to look more closely at Christian-European converts to Islam, branded as ‘renegades’ by their Christian-European contemporaries and historians alike. Although these individuals, too, have attracted no small amount of scholarly attention in recent years, most attempts to better understand the phenomenon have approached it from a Christian-European point of view and, with few exceptions, have examined the Ottoman contexts into which such converts entered only superficially. The present study is my contribution towards a reconstruction of what, to me at least, is a self-evidently missing dimension in historical scholarship on the Ottoman Empire and Christian Europe as well as relations between both regions.

It fills me with great humility to acknowledge the enormous debts which I have incurred in the course of writing this book. First and foremost, I thank my doctoral supervisor Thomas Maissen (Paris/Heidelberg) for the many years of inspiration and support as well as our challenging discussions which, time and again, have required me to rethink and restate my interpretation of the evidence, thus strengthening the arguments set forth in the following pages. I am likewise grateful to Felix Konrad (Basel) whose unfailingly helpful comments, advice, and support have far exceeded his official capacity as co-examiner of the doctoral dissertation “‘I Am Still Yours’: Christian-European “Renegades” in the Ottoman Elite during the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries” (defended at Heidelberg University in Germany on 30 January 2014) from which this work has emerged. I would not have embarked on this enterprise, however, without the help and encouragement of Kate Fleet and Scott Mandelbrote (both Cambridge) who have continued to offer advice over the years. William O’Reilly (Cambridge), too, has played no small role in moving this project along in more than just his formal role as temporary supervisor during an all too brief return to Cambridge in the autumn and winter of 2012/13.

The original research for this book was generously made possible by the German Merit Foundation (Studienstiftung des Deutschen Volkes), Heidelberg University’s Cluster of Excellence ‘Asia and Europe in a Global Context’ (under the aegis of the research group ‘Dynamic Asymmetries in Transcultural Flows at the

Intersection of Asia and Europe: The Case of the Early Modern Ottoman Empire'), and the Robert Owen Bishop Fund at Christ's College, Cambridge. I thank these institutions for their support and trust.

Early versions of part of the arguments developed in this book were published in two essays in 2014, while an exposition of the contacts between Cigalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa and his brother Carlo Cigala discussed in Chapter 5 is going to appear in a collection edited by Claire Norton (Twickenham).¹ Many of the ideas tentatively explored in these publications as well as my original dissertation have undergone significant development. Nevertheless, I am naturally grateful to the respective publishers for permission to reuse and further develop the original material.

I owe a special debt to Hedda Reindl-Kiel (Bonn), María José Rodríguez-Salgado (London), and Noel Malcolm (Oxford) for generously sharing with me not only their boundless knowledge in their respective fields but also providing me with archival material, occasionally even translations into English or German, which would otherwise not have been accessible to me. My particular gratitude is duly acknowledged in the footnotes. For their support and assistance, I also thank the staff of the Haus-, Hof- und Staats-, the Kriegs-, and the Finanz- und Hofkammerarchiv in Vienna, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, and the various libraries which I have made use of over the years. In Vienna, my particular gratitude extends to Ernst Petritsch, Michael Hochedlinger, and Herbert Hutterer for knowledgeably guiding me to relevant collections. The generous assistance of Markus Pillat, S.J., at the Archive of the Collegium Germanicum et Hungaricum, moreover, has spared me a trip to Rome.

For freely sharing ideas and manuscripts I thank Ayşe Baltacıoğlu-Brammer (Columbus, OH), Günhan Börekçi (Istanbul), Alicja Borys (Brno), Palmira Brummett (Providence, RI), Jeevan Deol (Cambridge), Hakan Erdem (Istanbul), Antje Flüchter (Bielefeld), Maartje van Gelder (Amsterdam), John-Paul Ghobrial (Oxford), Emrah Safa Gürkan (Istanbul), Antonis Hadjikyriacou (Heraklion), Andreas Helmedach (Bochum), Gábor Kármán (Budapest), Sebastian Meurer (Freiburg), Konrad Petrovsky (Vienna), Manja Quakatz (Münster/Bremen), Susan Richter (Heidelberg), Harriet Rudolph (Regensburg), Alexander Schunka (Berlin), Will Smiley (Portland, OR), Nur Sobers-Khan (London), Michael Talbot (London), Baki Tezcan (Davis, CA), Joshua White (Charlottesville, VA), and Nedim Zahirović (Bochum). In addition to these scholars, a number of colleagues and former teachers have left their mark on my work and I would particularly like to mention Tijana Krstić (Budapest), Sachiko Kusukawa (Cambridge), Mary Laven (Cambridge), Raoul

¹ 'Ladislaus Mörth: Ein ungewöhnlicher Renegat im Osmanischen Reich des späten 16. Jahrhunderts?', in Andreas Helmedach et al. (eds), *Das osmanische Europa: Methoden und Perspektiven der Frühneuzeitforschung zu Südosteuropa* (Leipzig: Eudora, 2014), 309–40; 'Of Half-Lives and Double-Lives: Christian-European "Renegades" in the Ottoman Empire and Their Pre-Conversion Ties, ca. 1580–1610', in Pascal W. Firges et al. (eds), *Well-Connected Domains: Towards an Entangled Ottoman History* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 57; Leiden: Brill 2014), ch. 8; 'Trans-Imperial Nobility: The Case of Carlo Cigala (1556–1631)', in Claire Norton (ed.), *Conversion and Islam in the Early Modern Mediterranean: The Lure of the Other* (London: Ashgate, forthcoming). An earlier version of my take on 'identity' also appeared in the introduction to pt 2 of Firges et al. (eds), *Well-Connected Domains*, 90–2.

Motika (Istanbul), Claire Norton (Twickenham), Marie and Roger Lovatt (Cambridge), Judith Pfeiffer (Oxford), Maurus Reinkowski (Basel), Stefan Rohdewald (Gießen), and Michael Ursinus (Heidelberg). I have benefited immensely from the close cooperation with the colleagues and good friends who worked alongside me in the above-mentioned research project, namely Christian Roth (Stuttgart), Gülay Tulasoglu (Ankara), and especially Pascal Firges (Paris). The aid of our student research assistants Lina Weber (now Amsterdam), Alev Kaynak, Aysegül Argit (Heidelberg), Abir al-Laham, Patrick Winkelhorst, and Teresa Roelcke have lightened the load. I am particularly happy that some of them have since become capable historians in their own right.

Chapters 4 and 5 of this study have profited from discussions with Christopher Andrew and Peter Martland (both Cambridge) who read an earlier draft of my investigations into the intelligence activities of renegades and the Austrian-Habsburg ambassadors in Istanbul. It was my good friend Stefan Ihrig (Jerusalem), however, who took on the task of reading the entire typescript—and parts of it more than once—in spite of working on two groundbreaking book projects of his own.² His suggestions have been unfailingly insightful and perceptive. I am likewise grateful to the anonymous readers for their critical feedback and suggestions which have been most helpful in further improving the present study. At OUP I would also like to thank Terka Acton, Stephanie Ireland, Dawn Preston, Kavya Ramu, and Cathryn Steele for their patience, their support, and, above all, their good spirits. Needless to say, all remaining errors are my own.

My gratitude naturally extends to my friends and family, particularly my parents Barbara and Bruno Graf without whom none of this would have been possible. Likewise, the unconditional love of my children Selena and Malik has proven an invaluable source of energy. Finally, I thank Gauri Parasher for her unfailingly positive outlook and intellectual verve. Again and again she has helped me regain perspective in all aspects of life.

This book is dedicated to the memory of my maternal grandparents Hans and Rosel Breusch who, in the early 1950s, took the courageous decision to live and work in newly independent India. The most important legacy they have left me is their example of intellectual curiosity and sympathy for the beliefs and customs different from those of my native country, their spirit of pioneering, and their love for history and languages, particularly English.

² Stefan Ihrig, *Atatürk in the Nazi Imagination* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014); Ihrig, *Justifying Genocide: Germany and the Armenians from Bismarck to Hitler* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

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List of Abbreviations

CSP Venice	Rawdon L. Brown, Horatio F. Brown, and A. B. Hinds (eds), <i>Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts Relating to English Affairs Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice and in Other Libraries of Northern Italy</i> , 38 vols (London: Longman, Green, and Roberts and Green, 1864–1947).
EP ²	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> , 2nd edn.
EP ³	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> , 3rd edn.
EOE	Gábor Ágoston and Bruce Masters (eds), <i>Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire</i> (New York: Facts on File, 2009).
HHStA	Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Vienna.
HHStA, Polen I	Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Staatenabteilungen, Polen I.
HHStA, StAbt	Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Staatenabteilungen.
HHStA, Türkei I	Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Staatenabteilungen, Türkei I.
KA	Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Kriegsarchiv, Vienna.
KA, AFA	Kriegsarchiv, Alte Feldakten.
KA, HKR	Kriegsarchiv, Wiener Hofkriegsrat.
KA, IÖHKR	Kriegsarchiv, Innerösterreichischer Hofkriegsrat.
TNA, SP	The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, State Papers.

Note to the Reader

TRANSLITERATION

This book draws heavily on sources and scholarship written in languages other than English. For this reason, all quotations from foreign-language texts have been translated. In the case of early modern English quotations, I have generally retained original spellings and punctuation, making minor alterations only, when I deemed them necessary to make the passage clearer to modern readers. As a matter of course, I have expanded abbreviations, contractions, and ligatures (placing any additions in square brackets) and, where appropriate, transcribed *u* as *v* in line with modern orthographic conventions.

Ottoman names and terms are rendered using modern Turkish spelling without diacritics, except for ‘*ayn* (‘) and *hamza* (’), as recommended by the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. For the sake of uniformity, the Ottoman variants of legal terms, names of offices, etc. are preferred; hence *darüislam* rather than *dār al-islām*. But where the Arabic word may help clarify matters for the sake of non-specialist readers, it will be given in brackets upon first mention in each chapter.

In divergence from the journal’s recommendations, I have chosen to use the modern Turkish spelling of words such as *ağa*, *kadı*, and *paşa*, even though these have entered the English language as agha, kadi, and pasha. I humbly beg non-specialist readers and those unfamiliar with the Turkish language for forgiveness but feel that this choice, which is indeed confined to these three words, makes for a more consistent typescript.

The following is a guide to pronunciation:

- c like *j* in *jolly*
- ç like *ch* in *chess*
- ğ silent, lengthens the preceding vowel
- i, î like *i* in *interest*
- ı, I like *e* in *women*
- ö as in German, similar to French *eu* in *bleu*
- ş like *sh* in *shambles*
- ü as in German, similar to the French *u* in *la lune*

PLACE NAMES

Places are referred to by their modern names or, where available, their modern English equivalents; hence Istanbul rather than İstanbul. Although a good case can be made for referring to the early modern Ottoman capital as Constantinople, Istanbul is preferred for the sake of non-specialist readers. If place names used in the sources cited diverge, the English equivalents or, if none exist, the names used in the sources are given in parentheses after the first mention of a given place in each chapter, e.g. Edirne (Adrianople). Where place names used in quotations from source material differ from their modern names, the modern name is inserted in square brackets after the name used in the source upon first

mention, e.g. Adrianople [Edirne]. When citing sources in the footnotes, I retain the original names or, wherever available, their English equivalents.

During the early modern period, the sultan controlled extensive territories on the European continent. Following the usual practice of contrasting the Ottoman Empire with Europe, as if the former were not a part of the latter, is, therefore, extremely awkward. Instead, the part of Europe not under Ottoman control will be referred to as Christian Europe and Christendom, in accordance with contemporary usage in Christian-European sources. The concept of Christendom is roughly analogous to that of the *darülslam*, designating the territory which is governed by Christian rulers. While this solution is not unproblematic, either, it appears as the best compromise.

Given that this book deals with the Ottoman as well as the Holy Roman Empires, there is a certain danger of confusion. To be clear, I use the short form *Empire* (with a capital E) *only* for the former, while the capitalized adjective *Imperial* is reserved for individuals, institutions, etc. belonging to the Holy Roman Empire, as in the terms free Imperial city or Imperial ambassador.

DATES

Dates in the main text are given as Common Era dates, using the Julian calendar for dates up to 4 October 1582 and the Gregorian calendar for dates after that. Dates in other calendars are converted accordingly, using the algorithms detailed in Nachum Dershowitz and Edward M. Reingold, *Calendrical Calculations* (3rd edn, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) where such conversion is not straightforward. Citations in footnotes retain the original date with the addition of the Common Era date separated by a solidus in the appropriate place, e.g. 5/15 Oct. 1582, 21 Nov./5 Dec. 1593, 3/13 Jan. 1588/9 (all three are examples of the English Old Style calendar, a Julian calendar in which the new year began on 25 March), 15 Rabi^c II 1007/15 Nov. 1598.



Map 1. Overview of the region under discussion in this study. Based on data provided by Natural Earth.



Introduction

On 27 July 1591 Edward Barton, the second ever ambassador of England to the Sublime Porte, informed the Lord High Treasurer William Cecil, Lord Burghley, of the death of a certain Hasan Paşa who had been the admiral of the Ottoman fleet. In his report, he did not fail to mention that his successor was ‘*Sigal Ogly* a Genues’.¹ ‘*Sigal Ogly*’ is Barton’s idiosyncratic rendition of Cigaloglu, better known as Cigalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa, whose family on his father’s side indeed hailed from Genoa. Hasan Paşa, too, had not been an Ottoman subject by birth. To his Italian-speaking contemporaries, he was known as *il Veneziano*, the Venetian. While some historians have Turkicized the Italian epithet to render the name of this man as Venedikli Hasan, the Ottoman historian Katib Çelebi refers to him as Uluç Hasan.² Derived from the plural of the Arabic word ‘*ilj*’, which has such manifold meanings as infidel, barbarian, and knave, perhaps even renegade, Hasan’s *nisbe* (epithet) reflects his origins from outside the Ottoman sultan’s Well-Protected Domains.³

Until very recently, Ottomanist scholarship by and large has remained conspicuously silent on the presence of individuals who hailed from outside the Ottoman Empire’s borders among those who administered, protected, and expanded its

¹ TNA, SP 97/2, pt 1, fo. 145^{r-v} (Edward Barton to William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Constantinople, 17/27 July 1591), at fo. 145^r. Compare *CSP Venice*, viii.550–1, no. 1075 (Lorenzo Bernardo to the Doge and Senate of Venice, Pera, 15 July 1591).

² Maria Pia Pedani, ‘Safiye’s Household and Venetian Diplomacy’, *Turcica*, 32 (2000), 21–2; Pedani, ‘Some Remarks upon the Ottoman Geo-Political Vision of the Mediterranean in the Period of the Cyprus War (1570–1573)’, in Colin Imber, Keiko Kiyotaki, and Rhoads Murphey (eds), *Frontiers of Ottoman Studies*, 2 vols (Library of Ottoman Studies, 5–6; London: I. B. Tauris, 2004), ii.28; Antonio Fabris, ‘Hasan “Il veneziano” tra Algeri e Costantinopoli’, in F. Lucchetta (ed.), ‘Veneziani a Costantinopoli, musulmani a Venezia’, *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* 15, supplement (1997), 51; Eric R. Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 123–5; Kâtib Çelebi, *Tuhfetü’l-kibâr fî esfârî’l-bihâr*, ed. İdris Bostan (Ankara: Prime Ministry Undersecretariat for Maritime Affairs, 2008), 139; İsmail Hâmi Danişmend, *Osmanlı Devlet Erkânı* (İstanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1971), 183–4. İbrahim Peçevi, *Peçevi tarihi*, ed. Murat Uraz, 2 vols (İstanbul: Son Telgraf Matbaası, 1968–9) does not mention the Venetian-born admiral at all.

³ İdris Bostan, ‘Kılıç Ali Paşa’, in *EP*³, par. 1; S. Soucek, ‘Ulūdij ‘Alī’, in *EP*², vol. x (2000), p. 811; Nicola Clark, *The Muslim Conquest of Iberia: Medieval Arabic Narratives* (Culture and Civilization in the Middle East, 30; Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), 133; José F. Buscaglia-Salgado, *Undoing Empire: Race and Nation in the Mulatto Caribbean* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 33. If the latter’s note is correct that ‘*ilj*’ was used in the sense of *renegade* from Christianity to Islam by Spanish Muslims after their conquest of the Iberian peninsula, given the fact that Hasan’s career began in North Africa and that numerous Spanish Muslims found refuge there after 1492, it may very well be that the *nisbe* explicitly refers to Hasan’s conversion to Islam.

Well-Protected Domains. While they could never be fully ignored, interest was restricted to notable individuals such as Cığalazade and derived exclusively from the positions which these individuals held within the sultan's service. Even systematic studies of the Ottoman military-administrative elite merely note the existence of such foreigners in passing, without, however, stopping to consider the implications of what clearly was a fundamental structural phenomenon in the making of the Ottoman elite.⁴

There is a simple explanation for this silence. Judging from the documents left by Ottoman administrators and Ottoman historians, the Ottoman state itself cared little for the origins of those who administered, protected, and expanded its Well-Protected Domains.⁵ For instance, the countless Mehmed Beys and Ali Beys who populate the Ottoman registers of appointment—frequently listed without their patronymics—are an almost undifferentiated mass, at times identified by prior appointments, but often not even that. In normal circumstances, there is no indication of where these people had been born, where they had received their training, or how long they had already been serving the sultan when they were entrusted with the office with which the register in question is concerned.⁶

Even when the Ottoman state recorded conversion to Islam, it remained generally disinterested in what had gone before. Consider the following entries from the *Büyük Ruznâme Defteri* for 2 and 24 Receb AH 1001 (4 and 26 April 1593):

Customary gift for new Muslims: 50 *akçe* in cash, 1 length of turban cloth, 1 skull-cap.

Customary gift for new Muslims: 50 *akçe* at 50 = 250 *akçe* in cash, 5 lengths of turban cloth, 5 skull-caps.⁷

⁴ See, for example, Metin İ. Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550–1650* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 97.

⁵ For many historians of Europe, especially those grounded in the extensive German debates on the early modern state, the phrase *Ottoman state* is contentious. Suffice it here to point out that I adhere to the compatible definitions of the state proposed by Michael J. Braddick, *State Formation in Early Modern England, c. 1550–1700* (Cambridge: CUP, 2011), 9; Antje Flüchter, 'Structures on the Move: Appropriating Technologies of Governance in a Transcultural Encounter', in Antje Flüchter and Susan Richter (eds), *Structures on the Move: Technologies of Governance in Transcultural Encounter* (Heidelberg: Springer, 2012), 13. Christine M. Philliou's preference for governance over the state as an analytical category in her *Biography of an Empire: Governing Ottomans in an Age of Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), xxiii–xxv points in a similar direction. Also compare the conceptual critique in Henning Sievert, *Zwischen arabischer Provinz und Hoher Pforte: Beziehungen, Bildung und Politik des osmanischen Bürokraten Râgîb Mehmed Paşa (st. 1763)* (Kultur, Recht und Politik in muslimischen Gesellschaften, 11; Würzburg: Ergon, 2008), 37–9.

⁶ Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, xxii and appendix 4.

⁷ Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, İstanbul, Bâb-ı Defteri Büyük Ruznâme Kalemi defter (D.BRZ.d.) 20627, pp. 47 and 54, "adet-i nev-Müslim: nakdiye: 50 [akçe] [,] destar, k[ır'a]: 1 [,] necife kıt'a: 1', "adet-i nev-Müslim: nakdiye: 50 [akçe] fi 50 = 250 [akçe] [,] destar, k[ır'a]: 5 [,] necife kıt'a: 5'. I am deeply indebted to Hedda Reindl-Kiel for generously having found, transcribed, and translated these documents into German for me. See also the entries reproduced in Reindl-Kiel, 'Das Ende einer Kavaliersreise—Beginn einer osmanischen Karriere?', in Reindl-Kiel and Seyfi Kenan (eds), *Deutsch-türkische Begegnungen/Alman-Türk Tesadüfleri: Festschrift für Kemal Beydilli/Kemal Beydilli'ye Armağan* (Bonner Islamstudien, 30; Berlin: EB, 2013), 138–9 n. 164.

Judging from the sums of money as well as the numbers and lengths of turban cloth and skull-caps, the second entry seems to record the presents given to five men who had embraced Islam in front of the imperial council. Yet while this assumption seems reasonable, we cannot be entirely certain without further information provided by other sources. More puzzling, though, is the fact that neither entry provides any clues to the identities of the converts. This is indeed unusual, since such registers frequently noted the Islamic names which converts received. Even where they are recorded, however, such information is of limited value since the practice of renaming mainly blended these converts into the existing mass of Mehmeds and Alis which makes it difficult to trace them in other Ottoman documents with any measure of certainty. On the whole, as Marc Baer has observed,

No matter the diverse circumstances in which people left their former religion and entered Islam . . . and whether written in gold ink in a presentation copy of a literary masterpiece to the sultan or jotted down in black ink in the inside cover of a Shariah court register, Ottoman writers and bureaucrats . . . were not concerned with the motivation of the convert and rarely recorded any of his or her intentions in changing religion, let alone the former religion or name.⁸

In short, therefore, Ottomanist scholarship on the Ottoman elite has, at least in this respect, been shaped and constrained by the primary sources on which it has drawn.

The Ottomans' disinterest in the backgrounds of Christian Europeans who embraced Islam to join the Ottoman cause stands in stark contrast to an almost morbid fascination with the individuals commonly referred to as renegades displayed by Christian-European contemporaries like Barton—and this fascination has generally been shared by historians of Europe. For his part, the English diplomat knew all too well that men of backgrounds similar to those of Uluç Hasan and Cığalazade Yusuf Sinan abounded in the Ottoman Empire. Reflecting on the fact that both incumbents of the Ottoman admiralty (*kapudanlık*) hailed from Italy, Barton therefore glumly concluded in the summer of 1591: 'Such is god[es] depe iudgement that Christendome is scourged w[i]th her owne breed, the whole power and force of the Grand Signior [i.e. the Ottoman sultan] resting and consistinge in runnegates, the children and ofspringe of Christians.'⁹

Leaving aside the issue of Barton's apparently bipolar world view of a Christian Europe on the defensive pitted against an aggressive Islamic Ottoman Empire for the moment, it is worth noting that, in spite of the impression given by official records, Ottoman commentators, too, were well aware of the importance of foreigners in the sultan's service, even if they hardly considered them the source of the sultan's 'whole power and force'. In his *Counsel to the Sultans*, Mustafa Ali enjoined his monarch that he must

⁸ Marc David Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam: Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 5.

⁹ TNA, SP 97/2, pt 1, fo. 145^{r-v} (Barton to Burghley, Constantinople, 17/27 July 1591), at fo. 145^r.

show the right measure of honor to those who come from another country, or rather, from a country that is ruled by another monarch. . . . the high gates of the sultans must always be open to comers and goers, and the hearts of followers and obeyers must at all times be elated by all sorts of favors and gifts—so that many more might be caused to come, too, to leave the side of the enemy.¹⁰

When Ali penned these words, the Ottoman Empire was facing two kinds of countries 'ruled by another monarch' as enemies: in the east, the sultans were enmeshed in a contest for legitimacy, prestige, and territory with the Shi'ite Safavid dynasty of Iran, while in the north and west their domains bordered onto what Islamic law calls the *darülharb* (Arabic: *dār al-ḥarb*), literally 'the house of war', which remained to be conquered by the faithful.¹¹ The conquest and incorporation of these 'hostile' lands into the *darüislam* (Arabic: *dār al-islām*), the territory under Muslim rule, was an integral element of the Ottoman sultans' claim to legitimacy.¹² Maintaining the upper hand in these struggles was therefore doubly important to the Ottomans from the point of view of realpolitik as much as that of ideology. For the same reason, as Mustafa Ali pointed out, attracting the support of 'those who come from another country' was vital, for the practical advantages which their knowledge and expertise might bring just as much as for the symbolic value of their changing of sides.

This, then, is a book about Christian-European renegades like Uluç Hasan Paşa and Cığalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa, former inhabitants of the *darülharb* who embraced Islam and, having thus thrown 'their face onto the dust of the Sublime Threshold', gained admission to the Ottoman military-administrative elite in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.¹³ While it is admittedly born out of that age-old Christian-European fascination with religious transgressors who sided with what was regarded as the ideological and political 'arch enemy', its main concern is the question of how these individuals fitted into the Ottoman elite and how they related to the Ottoman imperial enterprise. Although historians of Europe have time and again used their interest in the figure of the renegade as an

¹⁰ Muṣṭafā 'Alī's *Counsel for Sultans of 1581*, ed. and tr. Andreas Tietze, 2 vols (Forschungen zur islamischen Philologie und Kulturgeschichte, 6–7; Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1979–82), i.62.

¹¹ On the conflict between Ottomans and Safavids, see Caroline Finkel, *Osman's Dream: The Story of the Ottoman Empire, 1300–1923* (London: Murray, 2006), 169–73; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300–1650: The Structure of Power* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 63–6. On the division of the world according to Islamic law, A. Abel, 'Dār al-Ḥarb', in *EP*, vol. ii (1965), p. 126; Abel, 'Dār al-Islām', in *EP*, vol. ii (1965), pp. 127–8; Bruce Masters, 'Dar al-Harb', in *EOE*, 174–5; Masters, 'Dar al-Islam', in *EOE*, 175; Halil İnalcık, 'Dār al-'Ahd', in *EP*, vol. ii (1965), p. 116; D. B. MacDonald and A. Abel, 'Dar al-Şulḥ', in *EP*, vol. ii (1965), p. 131.

¹² Colin Imber, 'Ideals and Legitimation in Early Ottoman History', in Metin İ. Kunt and Christine Woodhead (eds), *Süleyman the Magnificent and His Age: The Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern World* (Harlow: Longman, 1995), 138–53; Imber, 'Frozen Legitimacy', in Hakan T. Karateke and Maurus Reinkowski (eds), *Legitimizing the Order: The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 34; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 100; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 118–21; Joshua Michael White, 'Catch and Release: Piracy, Slavery, and Law in the Early Modern Ottoman Mediterranean', PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 2012, 262. This should not be misunderstood as an endorsement of the belief that holy war was the Ottoman state's rationale.

¹³ Mustafa Ali, *Counsel*, i.62.

occasion to venture forth into the history of Christendom's perennial Islamic Other, there has been no systematic attempt to situate these converts' experiences fully in their Ottoman contexts. In doing so, this study draws great inspiration from Metin Kunt's pioneering work, even if, following the nature of its subject, it has to rely on different sources and different methods. To a much greater extent than existing works on the Ottoman elite, this study is an exercise in textual archaeology, an attempt to reconstruct from sources produced primarily by Christian Europeans for Christian-European audiences an aspect of Ottoman history on which the Ottomans themselves remained regrettably tight-lipped.

Doing so requires a careful reading of the evidence to draw out the dissonant voices, the rifts between discourses, expectations, and practices, and the ambivalences and ambiguities, all of which, when thoroughly contextualized, permit a glimpse at the world behind the discourse. In its fundamental approach, this book has been deeply influenced by a transcultural perspective which questions the fixity of boundaries and challenges the apparently neat spatiality created 'by the ordering principles introduced in the nineteenth century', which in the case of my work mean not so much the nation and its institutions, like national archives, as the belief in the effectiveness of political, linguistic, and religious borders in compartmentalizing the world.¹⁴ I particularly object to the notion that documents found in European archives and texts published in Christian Europe cannot but, at best, provide the perspective of well-informed, yet invariably *external*, observers of the Ottoman Empire. This is not a simple point about the preservation in, say, the Viennese archives of treaties with the Empire, correspondence with Ottoman officials, and even the odd private letter sent by one Ottoman subject to another as a result of military action or defection. Rather, recent research has begun to draw attention to the extent to which especially Christian-European diplomats in fact participated in Ottoman society and even its structures of political power.¹⁵

¹⁴ For an introduction to a transcultural approach in history, see Madeleine Herren, Martin Rüsch, and Christiane Sibille, *Transcultural History: Theories, Methods, Sources* (Transcultural Research: Heidelberg Studies on Asia and Europe in a Global Context; Berlin: Springer, 2012). The quotation is taken from p. 17. On transculturality/transculturalism as concepts underlying this approach, see Wolfgang Welsch, 'Transculturality: The Puzzling Form of Cultures Today', in Mike Featherstone and Scott Lash (eds), *Spaces of Culture: City, Nation, World* (London: SAGE, 1999), ch. 11; Jeff Lewis, *Cultural Studies: The Basics* (London: SAGE, 2002), 437–9.

¹⁵ Especially insightful in this respect are John-Paul Ghobrial, *The Whispers of Cities: Information Flows in Istanbul, London, and Paris in the Age of William Trumbull* (Oxford: OUP, 2013); Gülay Tulasoğlu, *His Majesty's Consul in Saloniki: Charles Blunt (1800–1864), ein europäischer Konsul als Agent der Modernisierung in der osmanischen Provinz* (Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, 325; Berlin: Schwarz, 2015); Tulasoğlu, '“Humble Efforts in Search of Reform”: Consuls, Pashas, and Quarantine in Early-Tanzimat Salonica', in Pascal W. Firges et al. (eds), *Well-Connected Domains: Towards an Entangled Ottoman History* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 57; Leiden: Brill 2014), ch. 11; Joshua Michael White, 'Fetva Diplomacy: The Ottoman *Şeyhülislam* as Trans-Imperial Intermediary', in Maartje van Gelder and Tijana Krstić (eds), 'Cross-Confessional Diplomacy', special issue, *Journal of Early Modern History*, 19/2–3 (2015), 199–221; Michael Talbot, 'British Diplomacy in the Ottoman Empire during the Long Eighteenth Century', PhD thesis, SOAS, University of London, 2013; Virginia Aksan, 'Who Was an Ottoman? Reflections on “Wearing Hats” and “Turning Turk”', in Barbara Schmidt-Haberkamp (ed.), *Europa und die Türkei im 18. Jahrhundert/Europe and Turkey in the 18th Century* (Göttingen: Bonn University Press and V&R Unipress, 2011), 305–18.

Moreover, are we really to classify the memoirs of those who, like Johannes Wild from Nuremberg, had spent long spells of captivity in the Ottoman Empire and had often been employed as domestic slaves as the accounts of outsiders?¹⁶

A transcultural approach allows challenging the boundaries between the 'inside' and 'outside' perspectives provided by different sources to look beyond language and audience as the only markers of relevance for this distinction. In fact, the dispatches of the Venetian *baili* (resident ambassadors) may contain significantly more 'inside' information on particular episodes than Ottoman chronicles for reasons such as access to information, the respective authors' aims and interests, and even the constraints of genre. What matters at least as much as the provenance of a particular source, if not more so, are the fundamental questions of who produced it, for what ends, and, consequently, how reliable the information is as a representation of the phenomena which we, as historians, are investigating. It is my firm conviction that the accounts of Christian Europeans who had first-hand and, particularly, extended experience of the Ottoman Empire offer much valuable material even to what at first glance might appear as a purely 'internal' history of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁷

OF CONVERSIONS, SHARED WORLDS, AND IMPERIAL RIVALRIES

Seemingly paradoxically, as Western societies have become increasingly secular and religiously pluralist, the study of religion and, along with it, the study of religious conversion have gained renewed vigour.¹⁸ In light of what appears to be a lingering resurgence of militant Islamic fundamentalism which harks back to the time of the prophet Muhammad and the early caliphs as models for the religious as well as political world order, the study of conversion to Islam has attracted particular interest.¹⁹ While it would be too simple to establish a direct causal link between the appearance of new scholarship on this issue and the increased public concern with Islamist terrorism in the aftermath of the attacks of 11 September 2001, the studies which have appeared since have been, whether explicitly or implicitly, embedded in the current discourses concerning the relationship between 'the

¹⁶ On this point, see also Nabil I. Matar, *Turks, Moors and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 78.

¹⁷ Emrah Safa Gürkan, 'Fonds for the Sultan: How to Use Venetian Sources for Studying Ottoman History?' *News on the Rialto*, 32 (2013), 22–8; Leslie P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (Studies in Middle Eastern History; New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 113–18; Sievert, *Zwischen arabischer Provinz und Hoher Pforte*, 18. In addition to Peirce's landmark book, this use of sources is skilfully demonstrated by Günhan Börekçi, 'Factions and Favorites at the Courts of Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603–17) and His Immediate Predecessors', PhD dissertation, Ohio State University, Columbus, 2010; Tulasoğlu, *His Majesty's Consul*, 63–7.

¹⁸ See especially Lewis R. Rambo and Charles E. Farhadian, 'Introduction', in Rambo and Farhadian (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 4.

¹⁹ Compare Karin van Nieuwkerk, '“Conversion” to Islam and the Construction of a Pious Self', in Rambo and Farhadian (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*, 667.

West' and 'Islam'. This connection would have been inevitable, even without former US President George W. Bush ill-advisedly branding the 'war on terror' a 'crusade'.²⁰ And consequently, as one reviewer of a collection of essays entitled *Re-Orienting the Renaissance* put it, '9/11 has made it a matter of urgency for scholars to rethink the history of the interactions between Christianity and Islam'.²¹ This sense of urgency is as understandable as it is current, given that we have so recently witnessed the proclamation of a new 'caliphate' which, at the time of writing, has obtained effective control over large parts of Syria and Iraq and is pushing into Libya and Afghanistan.

Relations between the Ottoman Empire and its neighbours in Europe are central to this enterprise. Not only were most regions comprising what we today think of as the Middle East part of the Empire until its eventual exit from the historical stage in the early twentieth century, its presence in South Eastern and parts of Central Europe bequeathed a legacy which continues to make itself felt even a century after the deposition of the last Ottoman sultan. With nationalist historiography especially in the Balkans often still defining itself largely in opposition to the 'Turkish yoke' by the turn of the third millennium, there remains a dire need for a more balanced reappraisal.²² At the same time, Muslim conservative circles in the Republic of Turkey have turned back with pride towards the Ottoman past, whereas Atatürk's followers had summarily dismissed the Empire as backward and inferior.²³ The study of religious conversion has an obvious role to play in this quest for a better understanding of the past and thus the possibilities for our future.²⁴

Alterity and coexistence—or, as Eric Dursteler has put it, the 'battlefield' and the 'bazaar'—provide the two poles between which the scholarly debates about the relationship between Islam and Christianity take place. While the idea of a 'clash of civilizations' remains attractive and, in fact, is witnessing a further resurgence in

²⁰ The White House, 'President: Today We Mourned, Tomorrow We Work', George W. Bush Administration White House website, released by the Office of the Press Secretary on 16 Sept. 2001, <<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010916-2.html>>, par. 17, accessed 18 Feb. 2016.

²¹ Gerald MacLean (ed.), *Re-Orienting the Renaissance: Cultural Exchanges with the East* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), endorsement by John Jeffries Martin on the book's dust jacket.

²² Anton Minkov, *Conversion to Islam in the Balkans: Kisve Bahası Petitions and Ottoman Social Life* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 30; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 64–92; Maria Todorova, 'Conversion to Islam as a Trope in Bulgarian Historiography, Fiction and Film', in Maria Todorova (ed.), *Balkan Identities* (London: Hurst, 2004), 129–57; Bojan Aleksov, 'Adamant and Treacherous: Serbian Historians on Religious Conversion', in Pal Kolsto (ed.), *Myths and Boundaries in South-Eastern Europe* (London: Hurst, 2005), 158–90; Selim Deringil, *Conversion and Apostasy in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: CUP, 2012), 5–6; Andreas Helmedach et al., 'Das osmanische Europa als Gegenstand der Forschung', in Helmedach et al. (eds), *Das osmanische Europa: Methoden und Perspektiven der Frühneuzeitforschung zu Südosteuropa* (Leipzig: Eudora, 2014), 9–23.

²³ See, for example, Patrizia Kern, 'Panoramen des Krieges: Verhandlung nationaler Identität anhand der Inszenierung kriegerischer Gründungsmythen in türkischen Museen, 2002–2009', PhD dissertation, Heidelberg University, 2013 [pub. 2015], <<http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:bsz:16-heidok-180263>>, accessed 18 Feb. 2016.

²⁴ Minkov, *Conversion*, 64–92; Christine Isom-Verhaaren, *Allies with the Infidel: The Ottoman and French Alliance in the Sixteenth Century* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011), 184–5.

light of current developments in parts of the Middle East and North Africa and their effects on the 'West', recent studies of conversion to Islam have, by and large, been part of an effort to reintegrate the Ottoman Empire into European history as more than just a perennial Other. This endeavour has ultimately drawn much inspiration from Fernand Braudel's erudite *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, first published in 1949.²⁵ Contrary to claims of Muslims' alleged disinterest in Christian Europe as more than just a territory to be eventually conquered and taxed, a considerable body of scholarship has highlighted the extent to which the Ottoman sultans had been players in European politics throughout the early modern period, as hated enemies as well as coveted allies.²⁶ Assessing the French-Ottoman alliance formed in the early sixteenth century, Christine Isom-Verhaaren concluded that such friendly relations 'were part of a web of connections, rather than an aberration from standard practice'.²⁷ While, in the realm of 'international' relations such interactions were instrumental in giving shape to fundamental elements of diplomacy and international law, entanglements went much deeper.²⁸ The so-called military revolution did not go unnoticed by the

²⁵ Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, tr. Siân Reynolds, 2 vols (pbk edn, London: Fontana, 1975). For a detailed examination of the historiography, see Eric R. Dursteler, 'On Bazaars and Battlefields: Recent Scholarship on Mediterranean Cultural Contacts', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 15 (2011), esp. 414–15, 434; Felix Konrad, 'From the "Turkish Menace" to Exoticism and Orientalism: Islam as Antithesis of Europe (1453–1914)?', *European History Online (EGO)* (Mainz: Leibniz Institute of European History (IEG), 14 Mar. 2011), <<http://www.ieg-ego.eu/konradf-2010-en>>, par. 46, accessed 18 Feb. 2016.

²⁶ Paolo Preto, 'Relations between the Papacy, Venice and the Ottoman Empire in the Age of Süleymân the Magnificent', in Halil İnalcık and Cemal Kafadar (eds), *Süleymân the Second and His Time* (Istanbul: Isis, 1993), 195–202; Isom-Verhaaren, *Allies with the Infidel*; Alexander Schunka, 'Böhmen am Bosphorus: Migrationserfahrung und Diplomatie am Beispiel des Grafen Heinrich Matthias von Thurn', in Eckart Olshausen and Schunka (eds), *Migrationserfahrungen—Migrationstrukturen* (Stuttgarter Beiträge zur Historischen Migrationsforschung, 7; Stuttgart: Steiner, 2010), 67–85; Pascal W. Firges, 'Gunners for the Sultan: French Revolutionary Efforts to Modernize the Ottoman Military', in Firges et al. (eds), *Well-Connected Domains*, ch. 10; Firges, *French Revolutionaries in the Ottoman Empire: Political Culture, Diplomacy, and the Limits of Universal Revolution, 1792–1798* (Oxford: OUP, 2017). The claim of Muslim disinterest in Europe is central to Bernard Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe* (pbk edn, London: Phoenix, 2000); Lewis, *What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response* (pbk edn, London: Phoenix, 2002). See the extensive critique of this view in the introduction to Nabil I. Matar (tr. and ed.), *In the Lands of the Christians: Arabic Travel Writing in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

²⁷ Isom-Verhaaren, *Allies with the Infidel*, 184. Contrast De Lamar Jensen, 'The Ottoman Turks in Sixteenth Century French Diplomacy', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 16 (1985), 451, who contended that 'the French king... was the first to abandon the traditional attitude of Christendom towards the Turks'. There is, however, a measure of uncertainty as to when this alliance was legally contracted. See Viorel Panaite, 'French Capitulations and Consular Jurisdiction in Egypt and Aleppo in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries', in Firges et al. (eds), *Well-Connected Domains*, ch. 5.

²⁸ Daniel Goffman, 'Negotiating with the Renaissance State', in Virginia Aksan and Goffman (eds), *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), ch. 2; White, 'Fetva Diplomacy'; White, 'Catch and Release'; Will Smiley, 'Let Whose People Go? Subjecthood, Sovereignty, Liberation, and Legalism in Eighteenth-Century Russo-Ottoman Relations', *Turkish Historical Review*, 3 (2012), 196–228; Smiley, "'When Peace Is Made, You Will Again Be Free": Islamic and Treaty Law, Black Sea Conflict, and the Emergence of "Prisoners of War" in the Ottoman Empire, 1739–1830', PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 2012; Michael Talbot, 'Ottoman Seas and British Privateers: Defining Maritime Territoriality in the Eighteenth-Century Levant', in Firges et al. (eds), *Well-Connected Domains*, ch. 4; Talbot, 'British Diplomacy'.

Ottomans, nor did the European political transformations which established increasingly inclusive polities in a process of proto-democratization.²⁹ Even religion did not remain aloof, as Millenarian expectations took hold across Europe, the Middle East, and South Asia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.³⁰ For this reason, my colleagues Pascal Firges, Christian Roth, Gülay Tulasoglu, and I have elsewhere spoken of 'well-connected domains' as a characterization of the Ottoman Empire itself as well as its neighbours. 'Domains' here was deliberately chosen in its double sense of territories and 'domains of human activity more generally'.³¹

Religious connections are obviously relevant to the history of religious conversion to and from Islam. Based on her extensive work on narratives of conversion to Islam in the Ottoman Empire, Tijana Krstić, for instance, has suggested that confessionalization was not an exclusively European phenomenon, but that the Empire, too, experienced similar processes. The corresponding enforcement of a specifically Ottoman Islamic orthopraxy, in this view, is in many ways part and parcel of the sultans' imperial rivalries with their Christian neighbours in the west and, doctrinally closer to home, the Shi'i Safavid dynasty of Iran.³² In this context, as will be more fully explored in later chapters, conversion to Islam acquired a political dimension. In his study of Mehmed IV's reign, Marc Baer detected a rather similar phenomenon, although he chose to employ a different terminology—and in fact strongly rejects Krstić's argument, even though he himself notes the obvious parallels to religious developments in Europe. Yet the Islamization which resulted from 'a turn to piety or conversion of the self, the conversion of others, and the transformation of

²⁹ On the Ottoman reception of military change, see Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500–1800* (2nd edn, Cambridge: CUP, 1996); Colin Imber, 'Ibrahim Peçevi on War: A Note on the "European Military Revolution"', in Imber et al. (eds), *Frontiers of Ottoman Studies*, ii:7–22; Günhan Börekçi, 'A Contribution to the Military Revolution Debate: The Janissaries' Use of Volley Fire during the Long Ottoman-Habsburg War of 1593–1606 and the Problem of Origins', *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 59 (2006), 407–38. The idea that the Ottoman Empire underwent a process of proto-democratization in the seventeenth century has been advanced by Baki Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (Cambridge: CUP, 2006).

³⁰ Cornell H. Fleischer, 'Shadows of Shadows: Prophecy and Politics in 1530s Istanbul', *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, 13 (2007), 51–62; Fleischer, 'The Lawgiver as Messiah: The Making of the Imperial Image in the Reign of Süleyman', in Gilles Veinstein (ed.), *Soliman le Magnifique et son temps: Actes du colloque de Paris, Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, 7–10 mars 1990* (Rencontres de l'Ecole du Louvre, 9; Paris: Ecole du Louvre, 1992), 159–77; Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Turning the Stone over: Sixteenth-Century Millenarianism from the Tagus to the Ganges', *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 40 (2003), 129–61; Subrahmanyam, 'Connected Histories: Notes towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia', *Modern Asian Studies*, 31 (1997), 735–62.

³¹ Pascal W. Firges and Tobias P. Graf, 'Introduction', in Firges et al. (eds), *Well-Connected Domains*, 9.

³² Tijana Krstić, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Stanford, CA: SUP, 2011); Krstić, 'Illuminated by the Light of Islam and the Glory of the Ottoman Sultanate: Self-Narratives of Conversion to Islam in the Age of Confessionalization', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 51 (2009), 35–65; Markus Dressler, 'Inventing Orthodoxy: Competing Claims for Authority and Legitimacy in the Ottoman-Safavid Conflict', in Karateke and Reinkowski (eds), *Legitimizing the Order*, 151–73; Gilles Veinstein, 'Religious Institutions, Policies and Lives', in Suraiya N. Faroqi and Kate Fleet (eds), *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, ii: *The Ottoman Empire as a World Power, 1453–1603* (Cambridge: CUP, 2013), 338–41.

sacred space' is very much akin to the enforcement of orthopraxy described by Krstić for the reigns of Süleyman I and his successors, with the difference that Mehmed IV's vision of Islam was one informed by Kadızadeli piety.³³ In both cases, one could argue about how actively these monarchs sought to promote the conversion of Christians and Jews to Islam, but it is clear that any such converts provided, to quote Baer once more, 'additional sanction for rule'.³⁴

When discussing conversion to Islam, the most contentious issue remains whether or not the Ottomans used force in order to convert their non-Muslim subjects as well as foreigners to the conquerors' faith. As a question for historical inquiry, it very much stems from Western preoccupations, informed, no doubt, by the alarmist commentaries of contemporary Christian Europeans who were determined to warn Christendom of the 'Turkish' peril. Besides, Christians themselves frequently relied on less than peaceful means in order to spread their faith at home and overseas. Nevertheless, the question is a valid one as large parts of the Christian populations in Anatolia and the Balkans did eventually embrace Islam under Ottoman rule. Moreover, the infamous 'boy levy' (*devşirme*), which is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 1, appears as an obvious 'case of institutionalized forced conversion' and it is therefore easy to regard it as an instrument of oppression. That 'the Turks' were oppressive and that South Eastern Europeans did not convert to Islam voluntarily has been a cornerstone of nationalist ideologies in the Empire's successor states in the Balkans.³⁵ Since the debate is substantial and since it is directly relevant to the subject matter of this book, the topic is best left to its proper place in Chapter 2 (section 'Captivity and Conversion'). Suffice it here to say that the Ottoman state, as Ahmet Yaşar Ocak concluded, 'never considered the official religion as a belief that was to be imposed on its non-Muslim subjects'.³⁶ Research on conversion to Islam in Anatolia and Ottoman Europe has emphasized the gradual nature of Islamization as well as the generally relaxed attitudes towards sincerity of belief and, consequently, crypto-Christianity and crypto-Judaism.³⁷

³³ Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam*, 6; Baer, Ussama Makdisi, and Andrew Shryrock, 'Tolerance and Conversion in the Ottoman Empire: A Conversation', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 51 (2009), 933. See also Baer's review of Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 23 (2012), 391–4.

³⁴ Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam*, 250; Krstić, 'Illuminated by the Light of Islam', 40.

³⁵ Quotation from Selim Deringil, "'There Is No Compulsion in Religion': On Conversion and Apostasy in the Late Ottoman Empire: 1839–1856", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 42 (2000), 548. For a critique of this kind of nationalist historiography, see, for example, Minkov, *Conversion*, 67–77; Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 21; Olga Todorova, 'The Ottoman State and Its Orthodox Christian Subjects: The Legitimistic Discourse in the Seventeenth-Century "Chronicle of Serres" in a New Perspective', *Turkish Historical Review*, 1 (2010), 86–7, and esp. the bibliographical information in n. 1; Helmedach et al., 'Das osmanische Europa', 13–21.

³⁶ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı toplumunda zındıklar ve mülhidler: Yahut dairenin dışına çıkanlar (15.–17. yüzyıllar)* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1999), 94. As translated in Deringil, 'No Compulsion in Religion', 554.

³⁷ Tijana Krstić, 'Conversion', in *EOE*, 145–7; V. L. Ménage, 'The Islamization of Anatolia', in Nehemia Levtzion (ed.), *Conversion to Islam* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1979), ch. 4; Maurus Reinkowski, 'Hidden Believers, Hidden Apostates: The Phenomenon of Crypto-Jews and Crypto-Christians in the Middle East', in Dennis C. Washburn and A. Kevin Reinhart (eds), *Converting Cultures: Religion, Ideology and Transformations of Modernity* (Social Sciences in Asia, 14; Leiden: Brill,

Among these converts to Islam, European Christians and Jews from outside the Ottoman Empire have often been treated as a group apart which has attracted scholarly attention primarily from Europeanists, rather than Ottomanists. Although the term *renegade* has a meaning which is considerably more complex and inclusive, as is explored in Chapter 1, the scholarly consensus in recent years, even among those Ottomanists who adopted it, has been to apply it predominantly to converts of Christian-European origins. To the extent that there is such a thing as a field of 'scholarship on renegades', participants in it have overwhelmingly been historians of the Mediterranean and scholars of literature. Consequently, we are relatively well informed about the representation of 'turning Turk' in English Renaissance drama as well as about conversion in the context of Mediterranean piracy and captivity.³⁸ While recent works have vastly improved our understanding of these converts' place in relations between the Ottoman Empire and its neighbours, we still lack a nuanced understanding of these converts' place in Ottoman society.³⁹ This book is a contribution to closing that gap.

2007), 409–33; Claire Norton, 'Conversion to Islam in the Ottoman Empire', *Wiener Zeitschrift zur Geschichte der Neuzeit*, 7 (2007), esp. 38–9.

³⁸ On literary representations of conversion to Islam, see Nabil I. Matar, 'The Renegade in English Seventeenth-Century Imagination', *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900*, 33 (1993), 489–505; Matar, "'Turning Turk": Conversion to Islam in English Renaissance Thought', *Durham University Journal*, 86 (1994), 33–41; Matar, *Islam in Britain, 1558–1685* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), ch. 1; Matar, 'Introduction', in Daniel J. Vitkus (ed.), *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption: Barbary Captivity Narratives from Early Modern England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 1–52; Vitkus (ed.), *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England: Selimus, A Christian Turned Turk, and The Renegado* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 1–54; Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570–1630* (Early Modern Cultural Studies; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), esp. chs 4 and 5; Matthew Dimmock, *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 100–1 and 194, 205–6. In addition to the literature cited in the next paragraph, conversion to Islam in the context of the Mediterranean, and particularly the Maghreb, is discussed by Stephen Clissold, 'Christian Renegades and Barbary Corsairs', *History Today*, 26 (1976), 508–15; Bartolomé Bennassar, 'Les Chrétiens convertis à l'Islam: "Renegats" et leur intégration aux XVI^e et XVII^e siècles', *Les Cahiers de Tunisie*, 44/157–8 (1991), 45–53; Gino Benzoni, 'Il "farsi turco" ossia l'ombra del rinnegato', in Alberto Tenenti (ed.), *Venezia e i turchi: Scontri e confronti di due civiltà* (Milan: Electa, 1985), 91–133; Jocelyne Dakhli, "'Turcs de profession"? Réinscriptions lignagères et redéfinitions sexuelles des convertis dans les cours maghrébines (XVI^e–XIX^e siècles)', in Mercedes García-Arenal (ed.), *Conversion islamiques: Identités religieuses en Islam méditerranéen* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 2002), 151–71; Fernando R. Mediano, 'Les Conversions de Sebastião Paes de Vega, un Portugais au Maroc sa'dien', in García-Arenal (ed.), *Conversion islamiques*, 173–92; Gerard Wiegers, 'European Converts to Islam in the Maghrib and the Polemical Writings of the Moriscos', in García-Arenal (ed.), *Conversion islamiques*, 207–23; Lucetta Scaraffia, *Rinnegati: Per una storia dell'identità occidentale* (2nd edn, Rome: Editori Laterza, 2002); Peter Lamborn Wilson, *Pirate Utopias: Moorish Corsairs and European Renegades* (Brooklyn, NY: Autonomedia, 2003).

³⁹ Gelder and Krstić (eds), 'Cross-Confessional Diplomacy', especially the contributions by Maartje van Gelder and Emrah Safa Gürkan; Gelder, 'Tussen Noord-Afrika en de Republiek: Nederlandse bekeerlingen tot de Islam in de zeventiende eeuw', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 126/1 (Mar. 2013), 16–33; Gelder, "'Een verlochend Christen [is] een quaetsten Mahumetaen": Nederlandse renegaten in beeldvorming en praktijk', in Joost C. A. Schokkenbroek and Jeroen ter Brugge (eds), *Kapers & piraten: Schurken of helden?* (Jaarboek Maritieme Musea Nederland; Rotterdam: Stichting Maritiem Museum Rotterdam, 2010), 41–3, 46–9, 52–5, and 123–4; Emrah Safa Gürkan, 'Fooling the Sultan: Information, Decision-Making and the "Mediterranean Faction" (1585–1587)', *Osmanlı Araştırmaları/Journal of Ottoman Studies*, 45 (2015), 57–96; Gürkan, 'Touting for Patrons, Brokering Power, and Trading Information: Trans-Imperial Jews

The single most important study of renegades remains Bartolomé and Lucile Bennassar's *Les chrétiens d'Allah* published in 1989.⁴⁰ Based on an impressive range of Inquisition records from Italy, the Iberian Peninsula, and the Canary Islands, their work is a systematic study of religious conversion and migration in the early modern period. In a similar vein, although on a much smaller scale, Ralf C. Müller has compiled a prosopography of renegades from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries as part of his broader enterprise of studying Christian-European travellers and migrants to the Ottoman Empire on the basis of German-language travel accounts.⁴¹ While Müller's analysis suffers from his reliance on outdated literature and methodological weaknesses, the greatest merit of *Chrétien d'Allah* is that it goes beyond the stereotypical view of renegades as traitors who turned against their former compatriots and thus were crucial to Ottoman military successes over Christian-European fleets and armies, a view which was not only expressed by contemporary observers but in various guises also found its way into serious scholarship.⁴² Having said this, the geographical focus of the sources used by the Bennassars as well as the biases inherent in them make it difficult to generalize from their findings, a point to which I shall return later in this chapter.

Apart from this, motivations for conversion have, for obvious reasons, been a primary research concern, for students of both 'foreign' and 'domestic' converts. In this context, Richard Bulliet's concept of social conversion has proven influential, even if it has perhaps at times been interpreted overly simplistically as a search for personal—often straightforwardly material—gain. In Anton Minkov's view, for example, the '*kisve bahası* institution', by which he means not only the practice of petitioning the sultan for rewards but also conversion to Islam itself, was

in Sixteenth-Century Istanbul', in Emilio Sola Castaño and Gennaro Varriale (eds), *Detrás de las apariencias: Información y espionaje (siglos XVI–XVII)* (Alcalá de Henares: Universidad de Alcalá, 2015), 127–51; Gürkan, 'My Money or Your Life: The Habsburg Hunt for Uluc Ali', *Studia Historica: Historia Moderna*, 36 (2014), 121–45; Gürkan, 'The Efficacy of Ottoman Counter-Intelligence in the 16th Century', *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 65 (2012), 1–38; Gürkan, 'Espionage in the 16th Century Mediterranean: Secret Diplomacy, Mediterranean Go-Betweens and the Ottoman Habsburg Rivalry', PhD dissertation, Georgetown University, Washington, DC, 2012; Gürkan, 'The Centre and the Frontier: Ottoman Cooperation with the North African Corsairs in the Sixteenth Century', *Turkish Historical Review*, 1 (2010), 125–63; María José Rodríguez-Salgado, 'Eating Bread Together: Hapsburg Diplomacy and Intelligence-Gathering in Mid Sixteenth-Century Istanbul', in Sola Castaño and Varriale (eds), *Detrás de las apariencias*, 73–100.

⁴⁰ Bartolomé and Lucile Bennassar, *Les Chrétiens d'Allah: L'Histoire extraordinaire des renégats, XVI^e et XVII^e siècles* (Paris: Perrin, 1989). The book has also been translated into Spanish and Italian as *Los cristianos de Ala: La fascinante aventura de los renegados* (Madrid: NEREA, 1989) and *I cristiani di Allah: La straordinaria epopea dei convertiti all'islamismo nei secoli XVI e XVII* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1991).

⁴¹ Ralf C. Müller, *Franken im Osten: Art, Umfang, Struktur und Dynamik der Migration aus dem lateinischen Westen in das Osmanische Reich des 15./16. Jahrhunderts auf der Grundlage von Reiseberichten* (Leipzig: Eudora, 2005). This is Müller's PhD dissertation. The database which he compiled during his research was published separately as Müller, *Prosopographie der Reisenden und Migranten ins Osmanische Reich (1396–1611)*, 10 vols (Leipzig: Eudora, 2006).

⁴² Hans Joachim Kissling, 'Das Renegatentum in der Glanzzeit des Osmanischen Reiches', *Scientia: Revue internationale de synthèse scientifique*, 55 (1961), 3, 7; Clissold, 'Christian Renegades'; Lewis, *Muslim Discovery*, 223–7.

‘a mechanism for social advancement, or simply personal welfare’.⁴³ Although Bulliet posed the axiom that, ‘leaving aside ecstatic converts, no one willingly converts from one religion to another if by virtue of conversion he markedly lowers his social status’, what is really at the heart of his concept are neither social advancement nor material gain, but rather admission of the convert into ‘the new religious community’.⁴⁴

Bulliet’s model has been fruitfully applied to Christian-European renegades by Felix Konrad who, among other things, has highlighted the importance of conversion for the social and political integration of these converts into Ottoman society, a thematic complex which is more fully explored in Chapters 1–4.⁴⁵ In the context of Russian prisoners of war who embraced Islam in the eighteenth century, Will Smiley has shown, for example, that religious conversion altered the prisoners’ political identity in much the same way as acquiring citizenship does today.⁴⁶

Konrad and Smiley belong to a number of scholars with Ottomanist training who have begun to pay closer attention to Christian-European converts to Islam in the early modern period. In many ways, this development has helped overcome ancient stereotypes about renegades by putting them more thoroughly into the context of developments in Ottoman society and institutions. In Krstić’s work, for instance, ‘foreign’ converts appear alongside ‘domestic’ ones to draw out and illuminate the existence of common religious discourses which spanned the religious and political divide between the Empire and Christian Europe.⁴⁷ And Gábor Ágoston as well as Emrah Safa Gürkan have drawn attention to the importance of these individuals in early modern intelligence and unofficial diplomacy.⁴⁸ At the same time, newer Ottomanist scholarship, notably Ágoston’s study of the Ottoman weapons industry in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, has done much to disperse the older legends of Ottoman dependence on Christian-European expertise and advisers, particularly in matters of military technology, at least before the eighteenth century.⁴⁹

⁴³ Minkov, *Conversion*, 165.

⁴⁴ Richard Bulliet, *Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period: An Essay in Quantitative History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), ch. 4, quotations from pp. 41 and 34.

⁴⁵ Felix Konrad, ‘Soziale Mobilität europäischer Renegaten im frühneuzeitlichen Osmanischen Reich’, in Henning, P. Jürgens and Thomas Weller (eds), *Religion und Mobilität: Zum Verhältnis von raumbezogener Mobilität und religiöser Identitätsbildung im frühneuzeitlichen Europa* (Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte, Mainz, Beiheft 81; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2010), 228–31.

⁴⁶ Smiley, ‘Let *Whose People Go?*’; Smiley, ‘The Meaning of Conversion: Treaty Law, State Knowledge, and Religious Identity among Russian Captives in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire’, *International History Review*, 34 (2012), 559–80; Smiley, ‘When Peace Is Made’, esp. 182–8.

⁴⁷ Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, chs 3 and 4; Krstić, ‘Illuminated by the Light of Islam’, 37–8, 46–50, 63.

⁴⁸ Gábor Ágoston, ‘Information, Ideology, and Limits of Imperial Policy: Ottoman Grand Strategy in the Context of Ottoman–Habsburg Rivalry’, in Aksan and Goffman (eds), *Early Modern Ottomans*, ch. 3; Emrah Safa Gürkan, ‘Mediating Boundaries: Mediterranean Go-Betweens and Cross-Confessional Diplomacy in Constantinople, 1560–1600’, in Gelder and Krstić (eds), ‘Cross-Confessional Diplomacy’, 107–28; Gürkan, ‘Fooling the Sultan’; Gürkan, ‘Espionage’.

⁴⁹ Gábor Ágoston, *Guns for the Sultan: Military Power and the Weapons Industry in the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: CUP, 2005); Rhoads Murphey, *Ottoman Warfare, 1500–1700* (Warfare and

It is no coincidence that Molly Greene shaped her idea of the shared world in the context of a study of Crete after its conquest by the Ottomans in 1669. As in the Balkans, local elites began to arrange themselves with their new Ottoman overlords and many embraced Islam, without, however, forsaking their ties to friends and family members elsewhere in what remained of the Venetian empire in the Mediterranean.⁵⁰ Scholarship on religious conversion to Islam—as, indeed, its corollary of Muslims converting to Christianity—serves to cement the notions not only of coexistence but also of the well-connectedness of the Ottoman Empire and Christian Europe. This does by no means imply that relations were overwhelmingly peaceful. On the contrary, as Nur Sobers-Khan has pointed out, ‘shared codes of honour and social rules could lead to conflict as often as they led to unity’.⁵¹ Paradoxically, armed conflict also served to perpetuate and even further increase the mutual entanglement of the constituent parts of this shared world. After all, the battlefield is no less a site of encounter and exchange than the bazaar, even if it is governed by entirely different rules.⁵²

TRANS-IMPERIAL SUBJECTS, ‘IDENTITY’, AND LOYALTY

Besides the perspective of a ‘shared world’ between Ottomans and Christian-Europeans, one of the most notable concepts to emerge from the recent historiography on the early modern Mediterranean is Natalie Rothman’s category of trans-imperial subjects. Rothman coined the term to describe individuals ‘who straddled and brokered—and thus helped to shape—political, religious, and linguistic boundaries between the early modern Ottoman and Venetian states’ and, by extension, Christian Europe more generally.⁵³ As Rothman explains, such individuals ‘regularly mobilized their roots “elsewhere” to foreground specific knowledge, privileges, or commitments to further their current interests’.⁵⁴

The phrase as such is, however, counter-intuitive. First of all, the adjective *trans-imperial* is not a qualification of the noun *subject* in the sense that such individuals

History; London: Routledge, 1999). Contrast Jonathan Grant, ‘Rethinking the Ottoman “Decline”: Military Technology Diffusion in the Ottoman Empire, Fifteenth to Eighteenth Centuries’, *Journal of World History*, 10 (1999), 179–201, who uses claims of Ottoman dependence on outside expertise throughout its existence as an argument against the Empire’s decline.

⁵⁰ Molly Greene, *A Shared World: Christians and Muslims in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Princeton, NJ: PUP, 2000), 105–9, 155–63, 203.

⁵¹ Nur Sobers-Khan, *Slaves without Shackles: Forced Labour and Manumission in the Galata Court Registers, 1560–1572* (Studien zur Sprache, Geschichte und Kultur der Türkvolker, 20; Berlin: Schwarz, 2014), 18.

⁵² See in particular Inga Clendinnen, ‘“Fierce and Unnatural Cruelty”: Cortés and the Conquest of Mexico’, *Representations*, 33 (1991), 65–100.

⁵³ E. Natalie Rothman, ‘Interpreting Dragomans: Boundaries and Crossings in the Early Modern Mediterranean’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 51 (2009), 773. Compare Rothman, *Brokering Empire: Trans-Imperial Subjects between Venice and Istanbul* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), 11.

⁵⁴ Rothman, *Brokering Empire*, 11–12.

were regarded as juridical subjects of more than one state, a situation found along the Ottoman–Habsburg border in Hungary.⁵⁵ Rather, it refers to characteristics of the individuals themselves, namely their knowledge about both imperial formations and their embeddedness in webs of contact on both sides of the political divide. The legal status as subjects of only one of them was clear, even when, in line with the religious polarization of the day, religious affiliation engendered expectations of political loyalty which were at odds with this status. Moreover, as Rothman herself points out, the imperial in *trans-imperial subject* more generally ‘points to the production and management of alterity’.⁵⁶ A number of scholars have described the creation and management of difference as a key element of imperial enterprises.⁵⁷ To what extent it really is unique to this particular type of political formation, however, is questionable. Most of the features which Karen Barkey, for instance, identifies as central characteristics of empires easily apply to early modern states more generally, which, in any case, more often than not were composite polities rather than the tightly integrated territorial states which came to dominate the European landscape from the nineteenth century onwards. This is true even of countries such as England and France which are usually regarded as pioneers of territorial integration and thus models of the European nation state.⁵⁸ Consequently, Rothman’s observation that ‘imperial subjecthood increasingly came to imply certain religious as well as political bonds, potentially at odds with individuals’ actual juridical status’ easily applies to numerous religious minority groups all over Europe such as Catholics in England and Huguenots in France.⁵⁹

What this critique amounts to, though, is hardly a dismissal of Rothman’s concept. On the contrary, renegades were quintessential trans-imperial subjects, as the following chapters show. I am convinced that the category can also be fruitfully applied to a number of other contexts—not necessarily empires in the classical sense—in which religious or ideological affiliation, political identity (not just subjecthood, but also nationality and citizenship), and political loyalty are intimately connected and where crossing the border between the boundaries in one of these aspects entails at least the expectation that corresponding boundaries in the others are crossed as well.

As my reference to expectations suggests, the issue has more than just a legal dimension. In fact, the complications introduced by Rothman’s category relate very

⁵⁵ Gábor Ágoston, ‘Condominium’, *EOE*, 141–2.

⁵⁶ Rothman, *Brokering Empire*, 12–13, quotation from p. 12.

⁵⁷ See especially Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: CUP, 2008). Rothman also cites Subrahmanyam, ‘Connected Histories’; James Muldoon, *Empire and Order: The Concept of Empire, 800–1800* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1999).

⁵⁸ Barkey, *Empire of Difference*; Harald Gustafsson, ‘The Conglomerate State: A Perspective on State Formation in Early Modern Europe’, *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 23 (2010), 189–213; J. H. Elliott, ‘A Europe of Composite Monarchies’, *Past and Present*, 137 (1992), 48–71; Richard Bonney, *The European Dynastic States, 1494–1660* (Oxford: OUP, 1991).

⁵⁹ Rothman, ‘Interpreting Dragomans’, 12; Braddick, *State Formation*, ch. 7; Perez Zagorin, *Ways of Lying: Dissimulation, Persecution, and Conformity in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), ch. 7; Barbara B. Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross: Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth-Century Paris* (Oxford: OUP, 1991).

well to recent scholarship on 'identity' in which renegades have played no small role.⁶⁰ As Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper have criticized, however, the term *identity* has been so overburdened with meaning as to be not only notoriously imprecise, but largely useless as an analytical category. For the purpose of this study, I am less interested in what Eric Dursteler has called the individual's 'essential self' ('self-understanding' in Brubaker and Cooper's more cautious words) than the ways in which 'identity' labels—acts of identification as, say, Venetian or German—located the individual thus identified within a social space. This relational sense is reflected, for example, in the use of words like *affiliation* and *belonging* as near synonyms of *identity*. Dursteler has consequently described *identity* in social terms as 'a process of definition and redefinition, of imagining communities, of perceiving or creating boundaries, as well as challenging these boundaries'.⁶¹ In the context of the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire, Ehud Toledano has argued that such relationships—he uses the term *attachments*—to kin groups and households were crucial even from the point of view of the Ottoman state in whose eyes those who lacked recognizable attachments were 'identity-less, anonymous to the rest of society' and therefore dangerous.⁶² In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, too, relationships of this kind were important. They were reflected, but also constituted, by categories such as Albanian, Bosnian, Muslim, Greek Orthodox, or 'Venetian' which, as becomes apparent in Chapters 1 and 4, were instrumental to the socialization of converts within the Ottoman military-administrative elite.

In contrast to previous scholarship which has spoken of 'multiple identities' as the sum total of all such affiliations which somehow constituted the individual's sense of self (an understanding inherent, for example, in Henry Tajfel's concept of *social identity*), I want to highlight the extent to which these localizations in social space are by and large dynamic, the subject of contestation between different parties, and often situational and dependent on context. It is for this reason, that Brubaker and Cooper have suggested *identification* as one possible substitute for *identity*. Identifications, therefore, are best treated as claims which do not merely and necessarily reflect existing social constellations (although they may, of course, do so) but have the positive power of constructing them. For this reason such claims are socially *constructive* as much as they are socially *constructed*. This emerges clearly, for example, in contexts in which identifications determine legal status as in Will Smiley's work on the release of Russians held prisoners of war or Gauri Parasher's study of litigation among Indians in the court of the Indo-French colony of Pondicherry (now Puducherry). In both cases, the legal procedures and norms applied depended heavily on identifying the individuals concerned as

⁶⁰ Scaraffia, *Rinnegati*; Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople*; Dursteler, *Renegade Women: Gender, Identity, and Boundaries in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011).

⁶¹ Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople*, 129, quotation from 104; Brubaker and Cooper, 'Beyond "Identity"', 17–19. See also Rothman, *Brokering Empire*, 13; Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, pp. ix, 108–9, and 115–16.

⁶² Ehud R. Toledano, *As If Silent and Absent: Bonds of Enslavement in the Islamic Middle East* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 24–31, quotation from p. 29.

members of one group rather than another—Russian versus non-Russian in Smiley's case and various combinations of ethnicity, caste membership, as well as religious affiliation in Parasher's. In both contexts, different parties would advance different categorizations, depending on their respective interests, in order to manipulate the relationships between them, the relevant states, and the members of other categories.⁶³

When shifting perspective from an individual's self-understanding to the way in which acts of identification related that individual to others, whether families, households, 'national' groups in the early modern sense of the word, or political entities, the individual emerges, in Harold Laski's evocative metaphor, as a 'bundle of hyphens': 'a point towards which a thousand associations converge'.⁶⁴ Since these associations do not necessarily coexist in perfect harmony, they are, as Laski recognized, continuously 'competing for . . . [the individual's] allegiance'.⁶⁵ Acts of identification, therefore, frequently provide either a means for pledging or demanding political loyalty or serve as a short-hand explanation for actual behaviour. When Bailo Matteo Zane, for example, reflected on Cigalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa's hostility towards Venetian interests, he explained it with reference to the Genoese origins of the renegade's family. By linking him to Venice's long-standing rival in the Mediterranean, the diplomat claimed that Cigalazade had remained loyal to the interests of his alleged place of origin and, at the same time, provided what must have been regarded as a plausible enough excuse for his own inability to win Cigalazade's support.⁶⁶

The tensions between the loyalties demanded by multiple associations, both actual and perceived, are an important element of Rothman's category of *trans-imperial subjects*. But in this context, acts of identification often fulfilled an at times even more important purpose: for a renegade to identify himself or be identified as German or Italian constituted a claim to certain skills and knowledge as well as contacts—skills, knowledge, and contacts which provided livelihoods and on which careers could be built, not only in Ottoman service.

⁶³ Will Smiley, '“After Being so Long Prisoners, They Will Not Return to Slavery in Russia”: An Aegean Network of Violence Between Empires and Identities', *Osmanlı Araştırmaları/Journal of Ottoman Studies*, 44 (2014), 221–34; Smiley, 'The Burdens of Subjecthood: The Ottoman State, Russian Fugitives, and Interimperial Law, 1774–1869', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 46 (2014), 73–93; Smiley, 'The Meaning of Conversion'; Smiley, 'Let *Whose* People Go?'; Gauri Parasher, 'Between *Saree* and Skirt: Legal Transculturality in Eighteenth-Century Pondicherry', in Christina Brauner and Antje Flüchter (eds), 'The Dimensions of Transcultural Statehood', special issue, *Comparativ*, 24/5 (2014), 56–77.

⁶⁴ Harold Laski, 'The Personality of Associations', in *The Foundations of Sovereignty and Other Essays* [vol. iii of *The Collected Works of Harold Laski*] (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co.; repr. London: Routledge, 1997), 170. Quotation from Harold Laski, *Authority in the Modern State* [vol. ii of *The Collected Works of Harold Laski*] (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1919; repr. London: Routledge, 1997), 92.

⁶⁵ Quotation from Laski, *Authority*, 81. See also *ibid.*, 83–4; Laski, 'Personality of Associations', 169–70; Laski, 'The Pluralistic State', in *Foundations*, 237.

⁶⁶ Luigi Firpo (ed.), *Relazioni di ambasciatori veneti al Senato*, xiii: *Constantinopoli (1590–1793)* (Turin: Bottega d'Erasmus, 1984), 289; Eugenio Albèri (ed.), *Relazioni di ambasciatori veneti al Senato*, 15 vols (Florence: Società editrice fiorentina, 1839–63), xi.425.

SOURCES

The most striking obstacle to the study of converts to Islam in the Ottoman Empire is certainly the paucity of information on this subject in Ottoman sources mentioned earlier. The obvious starting point for any attempt to reconstruct the biographies of individual converts would naturally be the autobiographical conversion narratives written by converts themselves. For a long time, Ottomanists believed that the Ottomans had left virtually no such egodocuments. Yet the discovery of autobiographical sketches and private letters in Ottoman manuscript collections in Turkey and elsewhere in the former Empire, even in collections abroad, have gradually begun to open new perspectives on Ottoman social and cultural history.⁶⁷ Tijana Krstić, who has extensively studied Ottoman conversion narratives, has recently pointed out that many more gems may lie hidden in hitherto unstudied personal miscellanies of notes and tracts called *mecmu'as*. She has had to concede, however, that 'personal narratives of conversion to Islam authored by Ottoman converts were very rare'.⁶⁸ Even if historians did have access to more autobiographical material penned by converts, for all their value, these kinds of sources introduce a number of difficulties of their own. Generally written for specific audiences and with specific agendas, even autobiographical accounts far from afford a genuine window into the authors' souls.

Against this background, Christian-European sources acquire special significance. Unlike Ottoman administrators and chroniclers, travellers and diplomats had a deep interest in converts' origins and former religious affiliations, especially if they originally hailed from Christian Europe. Mentions of individuals such as 'an old Turk born in Vienna' or 'a German renegade, this sultan's steward, named Mahmud and born in Graz' are legion, often compressing complicated life stories into half-sentences.⁶⁹ Journals and travel accounts such as Stephan Gerlach's *Tage-Buch* and Mitrovic's memoirs are treasure troves of fascinating information which would be impossible to come by in Ottoman documents. The same is true not only of ambassadors' dispatches from Istanbul but frequently also of official correspondence between military commanders and rulers. Reporting on a preliminary meeting with Ottoman representatives at the height of the Habsburg–Ottoman war of 1593 to 1606 held in February 1604, Bartholomäus Pezzen, a former ambassador to

⁶⁷ Cemal Kafadar, 'Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature', *Studia Islamica*, 69 (1989), 121–50. In the War Archives in Vienna, too, one time and again encounters letters written by Ottoman soldiers, or at least their summaries, among intercepted mail. See, for example, KA, AFA, box 36, file 1596/4/ad 3d, unfoliated.

⁶⁸ Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 88–91, quotation from p. 88. For her discussion of self-narratives see ch. 4 of her book and Krstić, 'Illuminated by the Light of Islam'. On *mecmu'as*, see also Nur Sober-Khan 'Fırasetle nazar edesin: Recreating the Gaze of the Ottoman Slave Owner at the Confluence of Textual Genres', in Firges et al. (eds), *Well-Connected Domains*, 102–3.

⁶⁹ Quotations from Václav Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Des Freyherrn von Wratislav merkwürdige Gesandtschaftsreise von Wien nach Konstantinopel: So gut als aus dem Englischen übersezt* (Leipzig, 1787), 78; HHStA, Türkei I, box 31, bundle for 1575 Mar., fos. 139^r–143^v (David Ungnad to Emperor Maximilian II, Constantinople, 30 Mar. 1575), at fo. 142^v.

Istanbul and by now a general as well as the leader of the Habsburg delegation at this meeting, did not fail to mention that the Ottoman party included 'a Dutchman who had been taken captive during the siege of Malta' (1565) who was now governor of Simontornya (Turkish: Şimontorna).⁷⁰ Given that such travel accounts and correspondence, especially in the case of high-ranking Christian-European converts in the Ottoman elite, often record not only the renegades' Muslim but also their former Christian or Jewish names these sources provide the crucial bridge between Ottoman and Christian-European archives and thus remain the easiest and most accessible starting point for investigations such as the one undertaken in this book.

Of course, one might object that basing a study of what is not merely a European, but also an Ottoman topic, on non-Ottoman sources is likely to cement a distorted and orientalist view of Ottoman politics, society, and culture. The drawbacks of relying on non-Ottoman sources is most immediately self-apparent in the frequent corruption of Ottoman Turkish names and terms or their translation which at times makes it difficult to pinpoint exactly what Ottoman institution, rank, or office is being talked about. Yet, while the 'historian's instinct . . . to prefer the insiders' is only too understandable, Peter Burke has rightly pointed out that outsiders, by virtue of being outsiders in a given society, provide information on aspects which insiders take for granted, and hence remain silent on.⁷¹ Information on matters such as the geographical origins, former religions, and pre-conversion names of Christian-European renegades serve as a case in point. At the same time, as I have pointed out above, the seemingly natural preference of Ottoman over non-Ottoman sources rests on a narrow and ultimately superficial understanding of who is an 'insider' and who is not. In fact, the existence of Christian-European converts to Islam among the members of the Ottoman military-administrative elite in itself serves as a reminder of how unhelpful traditional distinctions between 'insiders' and 'outsiders' are in the context of empires such as the Ottoman one whose hallmark is, in fact, the diversity of languages, geographic origins, and customs not only of their subjects but also of those who staffed the institutions of state.

Even Ottomanist scholars themselves recognize the value of non-Ottoman sources for studying aspects of life in the Empire which chronicles and official documents remain silent on. In his work on the courts of Sultans Murad III, Mehmed III, and Ahmed I, Günhan Börekçi, for example, remarked that the Venetian dispatches contribute 'unique perspectives on the course of events and the major political figures of the era' and even went so far to call them 'critical . . . to a study of the Ottoman court during this period'. A similar use of Venetian records has enabled Joshua White to recognize the strategic use of *fatwās* (Arabic: *fatwā*, pl.

⁷⁰ HHStA, Türkei I, box 87, bundle for 1604 Feb., fos. 72^r–73^v (Bartholomäus Pezzen to Emperor Rudolf II, Pest, 16 Feb. 1604), at fo. 72^r.

⁷¹ Peter Burke, *The Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Italy: Essays on Perception and Communication* (Cambridge: CUP, 1987), 15–17. The sentiment is echoed by Dror Ze'evi, *Producing Desire: Changing Sexual Discourse in the Ottoman Middle East, 1500–1900* (Studies on the History of Society and Culture; Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 149.

fatāwā), legal opinions issued by the highest legal authority in the Ottoman Empire, the *şeyhülislam*, in diplomatic negotiations between Christian-European states and the Sublime Porte—a phenomenon which White calls *fetva* diplomacy.⁷² Of course, as Börekçi's and White's research shows, for all their value, Christian-European sources, too, require thorough contextualization, which, if primary sources are inaccessible to the historian, must at least be provided by secondary literature. This is precisely the approach followed here.

The following chapters are the result of a systematic search for references to Christian-European converts to Islam—literally examining every single document for relevant information—in a number of primary collections, partly published, but mostly available only in manuscript. As has been mentioned, scholarship on Christian-European converts to Islam has largely focused on the context of captivity and conversion in the Mediterranean. In order to redress this geographical focus, the main body of evidence for this study has been drawn from the archives in Vienna, with the holdings of the Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv providing the self-evident starting point. The single most relevant collection there, of course, is formed by the *Turcica* (Staatenabteilungen, Türkei I) which chiefly cover diplomatic relations between the Austrian Habsburgs and the Sublime Porte. The bulk of material consists of the dispatches sent by the resident ambassadors in Istanbul, but the collection also includes various other reports alongside drafts of letters to the sultan and grand vizier as well as the letters sent by the governor-generals (*beylerbeyis*) of Buda.⁷³ In addition, I have been able to consult the reports from Venice (Staatenabteilungen, Venedig, Berichte) and have occasionally dipped into the collections concerning Hungary (Länderabteilungen, Ungarn).

A further treasure trove of relevant archival sources was provided by the Viennese War Archives (Kriegsarchiv). Here, the systematic search encompassed the extant files and protocols of the Aulic War Council based in Vienna, the detachment which accompanied Emperor Rudolf II to Prague known as the Aulic War Council of Prague (Prager Hofkriegsrat), and the Inner Austrian Aulic War Council (Innerösterreichischer Hofkriegsrat). The latter institution was established in Graz in the 1570s in order to organize the defence of the land border between the Habsburg possessions in Croatia and the Ottoman Empire. Although subordinate to the Aulic War Council in Vienna, it was an unusual institution in that control over its personnel was exercised jointly by the archduke and the estates of Inner Austria.⁷⁴ Unfortunately, a great number of records produced by these three

⁷² Börekçi, 'Factions and Favorites', 22, quotation from this page; White, 'Catch and Release', 116–22; White, 'Fetva Diplomacy'; Gürkan, 'Fonds for the Sultan'.

⁷³ For an edition of the letters sent by the *beylerbeyis* of Buda in the period under discussion here, see Gustav Bayerle (ed.), *Ottoman Diplomacy in Hungary: Letters from the Pashas of Buda, 1590–1593* (Indiana University Publications Uralic and Altaic Series; Bloomington: Indiana University, 1972).

⁷⁴ Winfried Schulze, *Landesdefension und Staatsbildung: Studien zum Kriegswesen des innerösterreichischen Territorialstaates (1564–1619)* (Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Neuere Geschichte Österreichs, 60; Vienna: Böhlau, 1973), 73–93, 100–35; Gunther Erich Rothenberg, *The Austrian Military Border in Croatia, 1522–1747* (Illinois Studies in the Social Sciences, 48; Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1960), 46–9; Géza Pálffy, 'The Origins and Development of the Border Defence System against the Ottoman Empire in Hungary (up to the Early Eighteenth Century)', in

institutions have since been destroyed, while others were relocated to other collections, notably the *Turcica* and the so-called Old Campaign Files (Alte Feldakten), thus obliterating the former contexts in which these files had been compiled. The collection of the Alte Feldakten was begun shortly after the Kriegsarchiv's foundation in order to assemble a comprehensive documentary base for all military campaigns undertaken by Habsburg forces. As such, material in this collection covers a variety of geographical and political contexts, although documents concerning the military conflict with the Ottoman Empire dominate throughout the period under discussion in this book.⁷⁵ Alongside the files produced by the various Aulic War Councils, this particular collection has proven invaluable to my research.

This documentary base is truly rich and varied. Although diplomatic reports form the largest genre of sources within this body of documents, the remainder ranges widely, including not merely the correspondence of military commanders, but also minutes, memoranda, financial records, judicial proceedings, interrogation protocols, and the intercepted mail of Ottoman soldiers. This list is by no means exhaustive.

METHODOLOGY

Neither of these sources, of course, are in any way 'direct' sources for the study of Christian-European renegades. Consequently, they need to be read against the grain in search of more or less incidental mention of such individuals. Although, by now, the practice of reading sources in this way has a long tradition which goes back at least to the 1970s, it is an integral tool of the transcultural approach to history alongside more traditional methods of textual criticism and the need for thorough contextualization and verification of information against other sources as well as existing scholarship.⁷⁶

Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor (eds), *Ottomans, Hungarians, and Habsburgs in Central Europe: The Military Confines in the Era of Ottoman Conquest* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 20; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 51.

⁷⁵ For the history of the Old Campaign files, see Michael Hochedlinger, 'AT-OeStA/KA FA AFA Alte Feldakten (AFA), 1323–1882 (Bestand)', Archivinformationssystem des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs, <<http://www.archivinformationssystem.at/detail.aspx?ID=3164>>, accessed 18 Feb. 2016, under 'Angaben zum Kontext', section 'Archivierungsgeschichte'.

⁷⁶ Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou, village occitan de 1294 à 1324* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975); Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971); Herren, Rüesch, and Sibille, *Transcultural History*, 92–4. See also David Gentilcore, 'Anthropological Approaches', in Garthine Walker (ed.), *Writing Early Modern History* (London: Hodder, 2005). Keith Thomas once reflected on his 'historical method': 'Because I am as interested in the attitudes and assumptions which are implicit in the evidence as in those which were explicitly articulated at the time, I have got into the habit of reading against the grain. Whether it is a play or a sermon or a legal treatise, I read it not so much for what the author meant to say as for what the text incidentally or unintentionally reveals.' Keith Thomas, 'Diary: Working Methods', *London Review of Books*, 32/11 (10 June 2010), 36–7, <<http://www.lrb.co.uk/v32/n11/keith-thomas/diary>>, accessed 18 Feb. 2016, par. 17.

In order to keep the number of documents to plough through manageable, the systematic search for converts was confined to a period of three decades between 1580 and 1610, although, in the event, the stories I have to tell frequently predate this time frame, a fact reflected in the title of this book. This choice is not random. From the point of view of inter-state relations, the period chosen is a particularly interesting one. As a result of the stalemate reached between the Porte and the Spanish crown in the aftermath of the Battles of Lepanto (1571, near present-day Naupactus) and La Goletta (1574), imperial rivalries in the West largely concentrated on the Ottomans' immediate neighbours, the Austrian Habsburgs.⁷⁷ The competition between the houses of Osman and Habsburg reached a new climax over such issues as Emperor Maximilian II's bid for the crown of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and suzerainty over Transylvania.⁷⁸ Diplomatic tensions were further heightened by the restlessness of frontier troops on both sides and the resulting violations of the repeatedly renewed Treaty of Edirne (first concluded in 1568, renewed in 1574, 1583, and 1590).⁷⁹ With the outbreak of the so-called Long War in 1593, the situation finally exploded into a full-scale military conflict which, in spite of initial Ottoman successes, made it apparent to both sides that in Central and South Eastern Europe, too, the Ottomans found themselves in a stalemate with their rivals.⁸⁰ The Peace of Zsitvatorok concluded in 1606 for the first time recognized the Holy Roman Emperor by his proper title, rather than merely calling him the 'king of Vienna', thus according him the same rank as the sultan.⁸¹ The frequency of violent encounters led me to expect that this period offered particularly many opportunities for Christian Europeans, whether soldiers or residents of frontier regions, to embrace Islam, either as a result of captivity, migration, or defection.

From an Ottoman perspective, too, this period is particularly interesting, as will become more apparent in Chapter 1. Encompassing part of the decades which older scholarship associated with the so-called 'sultanate of women' and the beginning of the Empire's supposed decline, the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries experienced the initial stages of wide-ranging social, political, economic, and fiscal transformations which were part and parcel of the Ottoman imperial consolidation. These transformations are highly relevant to understanding the integration of, and the political roles played by Christian-European converts to Islam.

⁷⁷ Dorothy Margaret Vaughan, *Europe and the Turk: A Pattern of Alliances, 1350–1700* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1976), 146–65; Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, 158–61, 169.

⁷⁸ Vaughan, *Europe and the Turk*, 175–83; Peter F. Sugar, *Southeastern Europe under Ottoman Rule, 1354–1804* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977), 153–7.

⁷⁹ Bayerle (ed.), *Ottoman Diplomacy*, 3–4, 8–10; Rothenberg, *Austrian Military Border*, 52–8; Jan Paul Niederkorn, *Die europäischen Mächte und der 'Lange Türkenkrieg' Kaiser Rudolfs II. (1593–1606)* (Archiv für österreichische Geschichte, 135; Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1993), 9–10; Vaughan, *Europe and the Turk*, 180–2.

⁸⁰ Vaughan, *Europe and the Turk*, 183–6; Sugar, *Southeastern Europe*, 157–9, 195–6; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 67–71; Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, 173–5; Noel Malcolm, *Agents of Empire: Knights, Corsairs, Jesuits and Spies in the Sixteenth-Century Mediterranean World* (London: Lane, 2015), 426.

⁸¹ Gustav Bayerle, 'The Compromise at Zsitvatorok', *Archivum Ottomanicum*, 6 (1980), 6; Vaughan, *Europe and the Turk*, 186; Sugar, *Southeastern Europe*, 159; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 71; Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, 175–6.

Methodologically, this book rests on a triple base of textual criticism, the reconstruction of social networks, and, although to a much lesser extent, quantitative analysis.⁸² The following chapters pay particular attention to the personal ties and associations of renegades to shed new light on matters such as their socialization within the Ottoman elite. The relevant sociograms have been prepared using the software package Pajek and subsequently edited to improve legibility and supply additional information.⁸³

At its core, this study is based on a sample of 137 Christian-European converts to Islam who had either converted at any point between 1580 and 1610 or, if they had embraced Islam before 1580, were reported to have still been alive in or after 1580. The individuals included in this group were culled from the sources described above as well as Müller's ten-volume prosopography of travellers and migrants to the Ottoman Empire.⁸⁴ On the whole, I have preferred to err on the side of caution, choosing to omit individuals about whose formal conversion to Islam the sources left room for doubt. Particularly, if there was uncertainty about whether converts hailed from within the Ottoman domains—a problem which is most easily appreciable in the case of renegades described as Hungarians, who might have been from either Royal or Ottoman Hungary or Transylvania—these were not included in the quantitative analysis. All statistics cited in the following pages refer to this sample although the discussion itself as well as the exploration of social networks include individuals who do not strictly meet the criteria for inclusion in the sample, for instance, because they had died before 1580.

On the whole, I have limited the use of quantitative information to such instances in which it helps contextualize anecdotal evidence or put it into perspective. In fact, the data that can be derived from the sample is of little use in many contexts simply because the sources on which it is based rarely contain the kind of detail which I would ideally have liked to have at my disposal. Significant gaps exist, for example, in the documentation of social status prior to conversion. In fact, the sources supply sufficient information to infer the social status of converts for a mere 11 of the 137 individuals contained in the sample (8 per cent). This share is so small that, even with the best of goodwill, the distribution among the various ranks cannot be representative even of the sample itself. On the surface, Ralf Müller's sample appears to have been better documented. On closer inspection, however, his listing of the 'social origins' of the 75 renegades who had entered Ottoman state service reveals a motley juxtaposition of social ranks proper, such as nobles,

⁸² Compare Raoul Motika, 'Adam Neuser: Ein Heidelberger Theologe im Osmanischen Reich', in Sabine Prätör and Christoph K. Neumann (eds), *Frauen, Bilder und Gelehrte: Studien zu Gesellschaft und Künsten im Osmanischen Reich; Festschrift Hans Georg Majer*, 2 vols (Istanbul: Simurg, 2002), ii.524, 535; Sievert, *Zwischen arabischer Provinz und Hoher Pforte*, esp. 22–4.

⁸³ For an introduction to network analysis, especially using Pajek, see Wouter Nooy, Andrej Mrvar, and Vladimir Batagelj, *Exploratory Social Network Analysis with Pajek* (2nd edn, Cambridge: CUP, 2011); John Scott, *Social Network Analysis: A Handbook* (2nd edn, Los Angeles: SAGE, 2011); Robert A. Hanneman and Mark Riddle, *Introduction to Social Network Methods* (Riverside: University of California, 2005), <<http://faculty.ucr.edu/~hanneman/>>, accessed 18 Feb. 2016.

⁸⁴ Müller, *Prosopographie*.

patricians, and burghers, with occupations like artists ('Künstler'), physicians ('Ärzte'), intellectuals ('Intellektuelle'), and clergy ('Geistliche').⁸⁵

It is only reasonable to assume that neither Müller's sample nor my own are representative of the larger population. For, even while the sampling method applied to the sources is sound, the criteria which led to the inclusion of persons in the documentation falls short of providing the degree of controlled randomness which effective statistical method requires. Especially when references to renegades are rich, it is easy to underestimate the amount of sheer coincidence which led to certain individuals being recorded in, say, travel accounts or diplomatic correspondence, while others leave absolutely no trace in the Christian-European sources. Not unlike documentation on the Ottoman side, whether or not information about a certain individual was written down depended on that individual's function and relevance to the respective writer. Consequently, coverage of high-ranking officials such as viziers and military commanders is excellent whereas less exalted members of the elite—to say nothing of converts who became part of the *re'aya*, the sultan's ordinary subjects, rather than the elite—often remain blurry, if not altogether invisible.

Similar caveats apply to other kinds of documentation such as the Inquisition records consulted by the Bennassars or the protocols of interviews with people taken prisoner on the battlefield. Even though *Les chrétiens d'Allah* draws on a far larger and geographically more extensive source base than this study, the records themselves introduce serious biases of their own. While the Inquisition may have had a wide-ranging presence in the Spanish and Italian possessions on the Mediterranean littoral, its records of necessity only cover those converts who, be it because of their will to return home or because they had been taken captive by Christian-European forces, re-entered Christendom and thus came to be subject to the tribunals' jurisdiction.

On the whole, given that it was a matter of life and death, the testimonies contained in the records of the Inquisition need to be treated with particular care. This is necessary not only because of the converts' need to manipulate the judges in order to fulfil the preconditions for penance which would lead to the ultimate readmission into Christian societies but also because such stories, as Martin Rheinheimer has suggested in the context of an eighteenth-century pirate captain returning to his native Amrum in the North Sea, served a therapeutic purpose for both the individual convert and the community to which he or she was to be readmitted. In order to reintegrate the returnee it was less important that the story be factually true than that it provided a truth which the converts as well as the communities around them 'could live with, and which enabled . . . [them] to live with . . . [their] deeds'.⁸⁶ As a result, self-proclaimed crypto-Christians and returnees to the Christian fold are, in all likelihood, significantly overrepresented in the Bennassars' database.

⁸⁵ Müller, *Franken im Osten*, 253–8, esp. table 1 on p. 253.

⁸⁶ Martin Rheinheimer, 'From Amrum to Algiers and Back: The Reintegration of a Renegade in the Eighteenth Century', *Central European History*, 36/2 (2003), 225–8, quotation from p. 228; Eric R. Dursteler, 'Fearing the "Turk" and Feeling the Spirit: Emotion and Conversion in the Early Modern Mediterranean', *Journal of Religious History*, 30 (2015), esp. 485–7, 504–5.

Table 0.1. Geographical origins of Christian-European converts in my sample.

Origin	Individuals	Percentage	
		of persons with documented origins	of entire sample
German	34	30.6	24.8
Italian	32	28.8	23.4
Royal Hungarian	18	16.2	13.1
French	9	8.1	6.6
Dutch	5	4.5	3.6
Spanish	5	4.5	3.6
English	2	1.8	1.5
Portuguese	2	1.8	1.5
Transylvanian	1	0.9	0.7
Croatian	1	0.9	0.7
Ottoman	2	1.8	1.5
Total	111	100.00	81.0

Note: The two individuals listed as Ottomans had first converted from Islam to Christianity before returning to the Ottoman Empire and reconverting to Islam. They are mentioned in passing in KA, AFA, box 35, file 1595/9/*ad* 2, fos. 485^r–499^v (Hans Siegmund von Herberstein to Archduke Ferdinand II, Warasdin (Varaždín), 16 Sept. 1595), at fo. 491^v; box 41, file 1602/8/*ad* 5, fos. 164^r–165^v ('Aussag zweier pribeghen, welche den 16. augusti aus des türggischen kaisers lager vor Weisenburg alhier ankumen sein'), at fo. 164^v.

The source biases affecting my own sample are clearly evident in the context of renegades' geographical origins illustrated in Table 0.1. Although information is fairly complete, with at least the region known in 111 out of 137 cases (81 per cent), the fact that individuals of German origins—meaning not only inhabitants of the regions now part of Germany, Austria, and Switzerland but also, for example, Transylvanian Saxons—form the largest, and Royal Hungarians the third-largest group, is clearly the result of the use of documentary evidence from the archives in Vienna. On the other hand, the numerical prominence of Italian converts, which includes Italian speakers from the Venetian colonies in the Mediterranean, is less affected by such biases since Italian renegades are mentioned with equal frequency in Venetian and English sources.

Table 0.2 lists a selection of converts' origins from the samples compiled by the Bennassars, Müller, and myself alongside each other. Note, however, that due to the different selection criteria as well as the different periods to which these figures refer, the numbers are not directly comparable. In *Chrètiens d'Allah*, Hungarians are, unfortunately, lumped together with other 'nationalities', including Greeks and Albanians, into an "oriental" sample (from Malta to the Urals and the Caucasus), reflecting the fact that the Inquisition, like Edward Barton and other contemporaries, made little distinction between renegades on the basis of whether or not they had been Ottoman subjects.⁸⁷ While the parallels between Müller's and my figures is only to be expected, given that my sample includes a subset of his and,

⁸⁷ Bennassar and Bennassar, *Chrètiens d'Allah*, 189.

Table 0.2. Comparison of a selection of geographical origins between my sample and those compiled by Ralf Müller and Bartolomé and Lucile Bennassar.

Origin	Individuals		
	My sample (1580–1610)	Müller (1396–1611)	Bennassar and Bennassar (1550–1700)
British	2	1	46
Dutch	5	2	35
French	9	1	171
German	34	30	13
Hungarian	18	5	n.a.
Italian	32	20	402
Polish	n.a.	3	n.a.
Portuguese	2	2	93
Spanish	5	7	459
Unknown	26	4	31
Total sample size	137	75	1,550

Note: This table presents only a cross-section of the three samples. The totals in each column therefore do not add up to the respective sample sizes.

Sources: Ralf C. Müller, *Franken im Osten: Art, Umfang, Struktur und Dynamik der Migration aus dem lateinischen Westen in das Osmanische Reich des 15./16. Jahrhunderts auf der Grundlage von Reiseberichten* (Leipzig: Eudora, 2005), 286; Bartolomé and Lucile Bennassar, *Les Chrétiens d'Allah: L'Histoire extraordinaire des renégats, XVI^e et XVII^e siècles* (Paris: Perrin, 1989), 150, 165, 178, 186, 189.

for the additional individuals, relies on documents of similar geographical provenance, the most striking divergences with the Bennassars' work—especially the large number of Spanish converts and the almost negligible numbers of Germans—more than anything, reflect the different source bases. That Italians form the second-largest group in all three samples is significant, however, and can be taken as corroboration of anecdotal evidence which suggests that Italians formed one of the largest demographic groups among converts to Islam from Christian Europe. The plausibility of this conclusion is indicated not least by research into the demographics of slave populations in the Ottoman Empire among whom people from Italy likewise formed a majority group in our period.⁸⁸

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Although Christian-European converts to Islam form the main subject of this study, this book approaches them as a lens through which it becomes possible to explore a range of aspects of the early modern well-connected domains. Chapter 1 accordingly opens with a historical overview of the development of the Ottoman

⁸⁸ Robert C. Davis, 'Counting European Slaves on the Barbary Coast', *Past and Present*, 172 (2001), 87–124; Sobers-Khan, *Slaves without Shackles*, 92.

military-administrative elite from the early days of the Empire until the second half of the sixteenth century to provide the crucial background for the remainder of this book. It also grapples in detail with the representation of renegades in Christian-European sources and its relationship to the representation of the Ottoman Empire.

Chapter 2 focuses on conversion to Islam as an act not only of religious change but more generally as a process of the convert's often sudden and wide-ranging transformation from a foreigner into a Muslim Ottoman subject. This involved a change of juridical subjecthood as well as legal status. On top of this, the conversion ritual itself was framed as a cultural transformation of the convert which found its most visible expression in the change of headgear. As I argue, speaking of religious conversion is insufficient to capture the extent of the transformation which new Muslims from Christian Europe underwent when they 'turned Turk', as contemporary Christian Europeans called the process.

Nevertheless, religious conversion was a *condicio sine qua non* for integration into the Ottoman military-administrative elite. Against this background, Chapter 3 takes a closer look at the political dimension of conversion. Using the rare testimony of the renegade Ladislaus Mörth, it situates the renegade phenomenon in what has been called 'the age of confessionalization' which was marked by religious polarization and the resulting politicization of religious affiliation. Chapter 4 then turns to the mechanisms by which Christian-European renegades were incorporated into the ranks of the Ottoman elite, which meant entering either the service of the Ottoman state directly or that of high-ranking officials. The Ottomans doubtlessly valued renegades' trans-imperial expertise but the extent to which it made them stand out among others of the sultan's servants has frequently been exaggerated. In fact, the experiences and biographies of Christian-European converts post-conversion closely resemble those of other recruits into state service, even in the ways in which these 'foreigners' formed associations and ties of friendship, patronage, and clientage. Paradoxically, this kind of network formation confirms the extent of adaptation to Ottoman social and political practices while at the same time highlighting the limits of Ottomanization as a replacement of previous connections and self-understandings.

The same paradox also characterized renegades' relationships with the families which they had 'left behind' upon 'turning Turk' as well as the Christian-European rulers against whom they were supposed to have turned. These relationships are at the heart of Chapter 5 which focuses on contacts and ties between renegades and individuals from their former homes, especially relatives and Christian-European diplomats. The continuation of such contacts calls into question not only the idea that conversion to Islam constituted a radical break with the convert's past, including the severance of former ties, but also illustrates that the image of the renegade as a traitor of faith and fatherland outlined above was contested, even by early modern political and religious authorities. Not only is there unambiguous evidence that some families regarded their convert relatives as sources of support and patronage and even developed trans-imperial strategies, Christian-European rulers and their representatives often enough considered renegades particularly obliging allies in the pursuit of their own goals.

In this, as well as in other chapters, the stories which my sources allow me to tell will improve our understanding not just of renegades, but, more importantly, their place in the imperial enterprises and rivalries in the Mediterranean as well as South Eastern and Central Europe. Along with Tijana Krstić, I strongly reject the notion expressed by contemporaries like Edward Barton and some modern historians 'that renegades were in fact the secret of the Ottoman success'.⁸⁹ In reality, they were only one motley group of people among many in the sultan's domains. At best, therefore, Christian-European converts to Islam expanded the pool of talent from which the Ottoman state could recruit its personnel. This is not to say that their presence was inconsequential, though. On the contrary, not only their individual actions but also the mere fact of their existence mattered—to Ottomans as well as Christian Europeans.

⁸⁹ Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 20.

1

An Elite of Converts

When Matteo Zane returned from his term of office as the Venetian *bailo* (resident ambassador) in Istanbul in 1594, his final report (Italian: *relazione*) voiced a sentiment similar to that expressed by his English counterpart Edward Barton in the context of Uluç Hasan's death. According to Zane, Ottoman society was easily divisible into 'born . . . Turks and . . . renegades'. While the former's role in the Ottoman state was restricted to 'offices of the judiciary, such as that of the *kadı* [judge] and the like, and those of religion, like muftis and imams', the latter saw 'entrusted to their hands the army, the government, the wealth, and in conclusion the whole empire'.¹ This latter claim was, in fact, a commonplace in Christian-European writings on the Ottoman Empire in this period.² In Zane's view, those who had converted to Islam were 'the most arrogant and evil men imaginable, having lost, along with their true faith, all humanity'.³ It is for this reason that Christian-European writers dismissively branded them as renegades.

Even though Barton and his Venetian counterpart were exaggerating when they commented on the prominence of former Christians who had embraced Islam in the military and administrative machinery of the Ottoman Empire in this way, they described a specific phase in Ottoman history. Converts had not always enjoyed such a central role in the Ottoman imperial enterprise, nor had political and military power always and invariably been vested exclusively in the sultan's Muslim subjects.⁴ Moreover, as we can only know with the benefit of hindsight, by the time the two diplomats penned these words, the situation which they were describing was beginning to change in the wake of wide-ranging and interconnected

¹ Luigi Firpo (ed.), *Relazioni di ambasciatori veneti al Senato*, xiii: *Constantinopoli (1590–1793)* (Turin: Bottega d'Erasmus, 1984), 253; Eugenio Albèri (ed.), *Relazioni di ambasciatori veneti al Senato*, 15 vols (Florence: Società editrice fiorentina, 1839–63), ix.389.

² See, for example, Daniel J. Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570–1630* (Early Modern Cultural Studies; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 16–17; Samuel C. Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose: Islam and England during the Renaissance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1937), 110–21.

³ Firpo (ed.), *Relazioni*, xiii.253; Albèri (ed.), *Relazioni*, ix.389.

⁴ See especially Rudi Paul Lindner, *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia* (Indiana University Uralic and Altaic Series, 144; Bloomington: Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, Indiana University, 1983); Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Heath W. Lowry, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State* (SUNY Series in the Social and Economic History of the Middle East; Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2003).

economic, fiscal, and social transformations which were to give rise to what Baki Tezcan has called the Second Ottoman Empire.⁵

TURKS, OTTOMANS, *RUMIS*, AND RENEGADES

Derived from the Latin verb *renegare*—to deny, reject, renounce—and having entered the English language through the Spanish *renegado*, the term *renegade* emphasizes an individual's apostasy from Christianity and the supposed abandonment of Christian values. Originally used especially for Christian converts to Islam, by the seventeenth century the word had come to encompass other forms of a perceived turning away from Christianity and Christendom in other contexts as well, especially for English speakers. Consequently, renegades were not only found—and made, for that matter—in the Mediterranean, but also in Asia and the New World.⁶

In popular understanding today, the term *renegade* has all but lost its religious connotations. While historically a pejorative word, I disagree with Claire Norton that these associations are still dominant today.⁷ Instead, just like the word *rogue*, *renegade* has become, as the late Sir Terry Pratchett so elegantly expressed it, 'a word with a twinkle in its eye'.⁸ Television shows such as *The Renegades* (first aired in the US in 1982–3, starring Patrick Swayze) and *Renegade* (first aired in the US in 1992–7), popular songs like 'Dreamers and Renegades' by the Belgian singer-songwriter Milow or 'Renegades' by the US band X Ambassadors, and even car manufacturers like Jeep (who released an SUV named Renegade in 2014, after first presenting a concept car of a very different style in 2008) have contributed to a general romanticization of the figure of the renegade as a symbol of resistance and

⁵ Baki Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (Cambridge: CUP, 2006). Note that the term has also been applied by other scholars to refer to the re-establishment of Ottoman rule after the civil war sparked by Bayezid I's defeat at the hands of Timur the Lame. See, for example, Peter F. Sugar, *Southeastern Europe under Ottoman Rule, 1354–1804* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977), 23–30.

⁶ *Oxford English Dictionary* online (last modified Dec. 2015), s.vv. 'renegade, *n.* and *adj.*;', 'renegade, *n.* and *adj.*;', 'renegado, *n.* and *adj.*;', 'runagate, *n.* and *adj.*;', 'renege, *v.*;', <<http://www.oed.com/>>, accessed 18 Feb. 2016; Nabil I. Matar, "'Turning Turk": Conversion to Islam in English Renaissance Thought', *Durham University Journal*, 86 (1994), 34; Matar, *Islam in Britain, 1558–1685* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), 22–3; Matar, *Turks, Moors and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 96, 215 n. 58; G. V. Scammell, 'European Exiles, Renegades and Outlaws and the Maritime Economy of Asia, c. 1500–1750', *Modern Asian Studies*, 26 (1992), 641–61, repr. in Scammell, *Ships, Oceans, and Empires: Studies in European Maritime and Colonial History, 1400–1750* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1995), item VIII; Colin G. Calloway, 'Neither White nor Red: White Renegades on the American Indian Frontier', *Western Historical Quarterly*, 17 (1986), 43–66; Linda Colley, *Captives: Britain, Empire and the World, 1600–1850* (London: Cape, 2002), 190–6, 286–7; Maartje van Gelder, 'The Republic's Renegades: Dutch Converts to Islam in Seventeenth-Century Diplomatic Relations with North Africa', in Gelder and Tijana Krstić (eds), 'Cross-Confessional Diplomacy', special issue, *Journal of Early Modern History*, 19/2–3 (2015), 176 n. 3.

⁷ Claire Norton, 'Lust, Greed, Torture, and Identity: Narrations of Conversion and the Creation of the Early Modern Renegade', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 29 (2009), 261.

⁸ Terry Pratchett, *Making Money* (pbk edn, London: Corgi, 2008), 90.

benign, ultimately beneficial, non-conformism. Consequently, popular imagination often envisages renegades, much like early modern pirates in the Caribbean, as heroes who attract a longing for independence, freedom, and individualistic self-assertion, not to mention adventure.⁹

In the early modern period, in contrast, the term was used almost invariably as a term of abuse and demarcation. 'Paranoia, fear, and rumor', James Calloway explains in the context of European settlers siding with Native Americans in the North American colonies,

established the stereotypical renegade as the epitome of evil and treachery. Frontier opinion gave renegades a reputation as degenerate outcasts who found in Indian society the freedom to give full vent to vicious natures and homicidal tendencies. They surpassed their Indian friends in savagery and cruelty. To join forces with the Indians seemed to represent the ultimate act of betrayal and to indicate for certain that an individual had undergone conversion to 'savagery'.¹⁰

This is reminiscent of Zane's statement quoted earlier. The accusation of treachery and even formal treason, well established in Christian-European commentaries on renegades to Islam, points to a political dimension inherent in this conversion, whether to Islam or 'savagery', which is more fully explored in Chapters 3 and 4.¹¹

The category of the renegade, moreover, is highly gendered. Even though Eric Dursteler's work has generously applied the term to men and women, Christian-European sources unequivocally reserve this term for men, particularly in the context of conversion to Islam.¹² While this gendering deserves a study in its own right, it is probably fair to link it, firstly, to Christian-European (male) writers' attitudes towards the capacity for agency of the different sexes as well as an understanding that women's fates were often determined by men which made

⁹ Milow, 'Dreamers and Renegades', in *Coming of Age* (Homerun Records and Munich Records MRCDX 293, 2008) [CD]; X Ambassadors, 'Renegades', in *VHS* (KIDinaKORNER B0023430-02, 2015) [CD]. For further information on the TV shows, see 'The Renegades (TV Series 1983-)', IMDb, <<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0085078/>>; 'The Renegades', Wikipedia (last modified 13 June 2015), <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Renegades>; 'Renegade (TV Series 1992-1997)', IMDb, <<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0103524/>>; 'Renegade (TV series)', Wikipedia (last modified 15 Feb. 2016), <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renegade_\(TV_series\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renegade_(TV_series))>. On the Jeep Renegade and the history of this car model, 'Jeep Renegade (Concept)', Wikipedia (last modified 17 Oct. 2014), <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeep_Renegade_\(Concept\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeep_Renegade_(Concept))>; 'Jeep Renegade (BU)', Wikipedia (last modified 27 Jan. 2016), <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeep_Renegade_\(BU\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeep_Renegade_(BU))>. All websites were last accessed on 18 Feb. 2016.

¹⁰ Calloway, 'Neither White nor Red', 44. Compare Matar, *Turks, Moors and Englishmen*, 96 and 170.

¹¹ See also Norton, 'Lust', 261; Tijana Krstić, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Stanford, CA: SUP, 2011), 112-13; Christine Isom-Verhaaren, *Allies with the Infidel: The Ottoman and French Alliance in the Sixteenth Century* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011), ch. 2; Isom-Verhaaren, 'Shifting Identities: Foreign State Servants in France and the Ottoman Empire', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 8 (2004), 109-34; Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, 83; Matar, *Turks, Moors and Englishmen*, 53; Matar, *Islam in Britain*, 71.

¹² See Eric R. Dursteler, *Renegade Women: Gender, Identity, and Boundaries in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), esp. pp. ix-x for his extended definition of the term *renegade*; Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), ch. 4.

the voluntary nature of most women's conversions to Islam suspect, as well as, secondly, the prevalence of gender segregation in Ottoman Muslim society which severely limited contact between Christian-European male writers and Muslim women, among them naturally female converts to Islam.¹³ At the same time, the overwhelming majority of those described as renegades were men serving in the Ottoman military-administrative elite and thus individuals whose apostasy was not only spiritually heinous but politically and militarily dangerous.

Perhaps mainly for this reason, allegations such as Zane's that renegades were even crueller and more given to worldly pleasures than 'the Turks'—the label commonly applied to Muslims regardless of their ethnicity—appears as a stock trope in Christian-European writings on the Ottoman Empire.¹⁴ The Bohemian nobleman Václav Vratislav of Mitrovic, for instance, reiterated similar stories in his memoirs of his stay in the Ottoman capital where he had travelled as part of a Habsburg embassy. Of Çiğalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa he wrote that, following his conversion to Islam, 'having once tasted Turkish freedom and pleasures, [he] proceeded gradually to worse and worse, till now he will have nothing to do with Christianity; but, on the contrary . . . is a great enemy of the Christians.'¹⁵ However, in the period examined in this book, Ottoman writers considered themselves not as Turks—an ethnic term which in their eyes was associated with a certain lack of sophistication—but as '*Rumis*, or people of the lands of Rum'. Doing so was a conscious invocation of the Eastern Roman, that is the Byzantine, Empire whose lands were now governed by the Ottoman sultan and in which a particular form of Turkish was now the hegemonic language. As such, the label *Rumi* transcended ethnic categories of belonging and instead built on a common, mainly urban, culture, a crucial part of which was command of Ottoman Turkish. As Cemal Kafadar has pointed out, the label *Rumi*

¹³ Marc David Baer, 'Islamic Conversion Narratives of Women: Social Change and Gendered Religious Hierarchy in Early Modern Ottoman Istanbul', *Gender and History*, 16 (2004), esp. 452; Dror Ze'evi, *Producing Desire: Changing Sexual Discourse in the Ottoman Middle East, 1500–1900* (Studies on the History of Society and Culture; Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 150, 153.

¹⁴ Norton, 'Lust', 260–1; Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, 16–17, 36, 91; Chew, *Crescent and Rose*, 362; Felix Konrad, 'From the "Turkish Menace" to Exoticism and Orientalism: Islam as Antithesis of Europe (1453–1914)?', *European History Online* (Mainz: Leibniz Institute of European History, 14 Mar. 2011), par. 7, <<http://www.ieg-cgo.eu/konradf-2010-en>>, accessed 18 Feb. 2016; Gábor Kármán, 'Turks Reconsidered: Jakab Harsányi Nagy's Changing Image of the Ottoman', in Pascal W. Firges et al. (eds), *Well-Connected Domains: Towards an Entangled Ottoman History* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 57; Leiden: Brill 2014), ch. 7; Nabil Matar (tr. and ed.), *In the Lands of the Christians: Arabic Travel Writing in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 9 (from Ahmad bin-Qasim al-Hajari's account of his travels in Christian Europe in the early seventeenth century); Renate Lachmann (tr. and ed.), *Memoiren eines Janitscharen oder Türkische Chronik*, with notes by Claus-Peter Haase, Renate Lachmann, and Günther Prinzing (Slavische Geschichtsschreiber, 8; Graz: Styria, 1975), 172; William Lithgow, *The Totall Discourse, of the Rare Adventures, and Painfull Peregrinations of Long Nineteene Yeares Travailles from Scotland, to the Most Famous Kingdomes in Europe, Asia, and Affrica* (London, 1640), 188–9.

¹⁵ Václav Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures of Baron Wenceslas Wratislav of Mitrowitz*, tr. A. H. Wratislav (London: Bell and Daldy, 1862), 54; Laura Lisy-Wagner, *Islam, Christianity and the Making of Czech Identity, 1453–1683* (Transculturalisms, 1400–1700; Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 73–4, 80.

was used in large measure to designate a novel social and cultural constellation, namely the identity of those from a variety of backgrounds but with a shared disposition toward a certain style of expression in the arts as well as quotidian life. The limits of Rumi-ness were delineated, to some degree, by linguistic and geographic criteria.

Hence the sultan's Arabic-speaking subjects were not considered *Rumi*, nor, on occasion, were inhabitants of Eastern Anatolia who were often included among the *Acem* because they spoke and wrote in Persian and followed a more distinctly Persian literary style. In its most narrow sense, the lands of Rum encompassed the south-eastern Balkans and western Anatolia, the core lands once ruled over by the Byzantines, and *Rumis* were the inhabitants of these regions.¹⁶

There are certain affinities between the concepts of *Rumi* and *Osmanlı* (literally the followers of Osman). Both groups were ethnically diverse and united primarily by a common idiom of which those considered part of these groups were not necessarily native speakers. Most importantly in the context of this book, although Kafadar for example never makes this explicit in his discussion of the terms, both labels referred to Muslims. Those who became *Osmanlı* and joined *Rumi* society had embraced Islam, and they did so, by and large, 'without any stigma' deriving from their geographical and religious origins. Both labels also share the association of membership in an upper social and intellectual class distinct from the Turkish-speaking peasantry. Unlike *Rumi*, however, *Osmanlı* is not a geographic, but a distinctly political term. Ultimately, *Osmanlıs* were defined as such by their membership in the Ottoman military-administrative and bureaucratic elite, by their status as servants of the sultan, though not necessarily in the literal sense as his *kuls* (slaves). The category of *Rumi*, in contrast, had no political connotations. It was not even used by the Ottoman state for the purpose of categorizing its subjects.¹⁷

In scholarship on the Ottoman Empire, the issue of terminology is generally confounded by the use of the English term *Ottoman* which, at once, serves as a literal translation of the Turkish *Osmanlı* and a territorial identification which associates whatever is described as Ottoman with the Ottoman sultan's realm. In the latter sense, *Ottoman* encapsulates such a wide variety of peoples, cultural practices, and religions that phrases such as *Ottoman dress* or even *Ottoman Christians* are dangerously misleading in suggesting, to those unfamiliar with the diversity of the sultan's dominions, a coherence and uniformity which simply did not exist. Nevertheless, the term remains a convenient shorthand for referring to phenomena and people associated with the Ottoman Empire whenever the political association with this state and its territory are relevant. For the purpose of this study, which explicitly focuses on the Ottoman military-administrative elite, the English word *Ottoman* is generally used in the first, narrower sense.

¹⁶ Cemal Kafadar, 'A Rome of One's Own: Reflections on Cultural Geography and Identity in the Lands of Rum', *Muqarnas*, 24 (2007), 7, 15; Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 3–6.

¹⁷ Kafadar, 'A Rome of One's Own', 12–14, quotation from p. 14; Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 5; Henning Sievert, *Zwischen arabischer Provinz und Hoher Pforte: Beziehungen, Bildung und Politik des osmanischen Bürokraten Râğib Mehmed Paşa (st. 1763)* (Kultur, Recht und Politik in muslimischen Gesellschaften, 11; Würzburg: Ergon, 2008), 50–1, 460–1.

The verbal abuse heaped on those who had embraced Islam is intimately connected to the wider rhetoric about the Ottomans current in Christian Europe.¹⁸ On the basis of books, broadsheets, and sermons produced in the Holy Roman Empire during the sixteenth century, Winfried Schulze has argued that the German-speaking lands of Central Europe had been gripped by what he calls the 'arch-enemy syndrome' (*Erbfeindsyndrom*). From this discourse, waged at the popular as well as elite levels, the 'Turk' emerges as the natural enemy. 'Being a Turk', Schulze concludes, 'was sufficient to be an enemy of Christendom.' In Central Europe, such antagonisms were reinforced by the self-perception of being the 'bulwark of Christianity' which stemmed the tide of Muslim expansion.¹⁹ Broadly similar stereotypes circulated elsewhere in Christian Europe, even if the situation of enmity was less pronounced in places like the Netherlands and England.²⁰ If the 'Turks' were the epitome of evil, how much worse was a Christian who had chosen to become one of them?

In practice, however, there were strong tensions between the dominant rhetoric of alterity and the appraisal of Ottoman military and political strength as well as individual instances of charity, benevolence, and piety recorded in travel and captivity narratives and reproduced in other genres such as histories, dramas, and images.²¹ Johannes Wild's account of his long captivity in the Ottoman Empire printed in Nuremberg in 1623 is a particularly rich example of ambivalence and

¹⁸ This connection is made, for example, by Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, ch. 4. Konrad, 'Turkish Menace' provides a recent summary of Christian-European discourses about the Ottomans.

¹⁹ Winfried Schulze, *Reich und Türkengefahr im späten 16. Jahrhundert: Studien zu den politischen und gesellschaftlichen Auswirkungen einer äußeren Bedrohung* (Munich: Beck, 1978), 52–66, quotations from pp. 52 and 55. See also Şenol Özyurt, *Die Türkenlieder und das Türkenbild in der deutschen Volksüberlieferung vom 16. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert* (Motive: Freiburger folkloristische Forschungen, 4; Munich: Fink, 1972), 21–7, 120–3; Konrad, 'Turkish Menace', pars. 5–17, esp. par. 11; Paula Sutter Fichtner, *Terror and Toleration: The Habsburg Empire Confronts Islam, 1526–1850* (London: Reaktion Books, 2008), 46–58; Lisy-Wagner, *Czech Identity*, 60–2 (idea of the *antemurale Christianitatis*), 66–8 (discussion of Mikuláš Konáč z Hodiškovy's anti-Ottoman polemic).

²⁰ M. E. H. N. Mout, 'Turken in het nieuws: Beeldvorming en publieke opinie in de zestiende-eeuwse Nederlanden', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 97 (1984), 362–81; Gelder, 'The Republic's Renegades', 183–4, 188–9; Chew, *Crescent and Rose*, ch. 3; Matar, 'Turning Turk'; Matar, *Islam in Britain*; Matar, *Turks, Moors and Englishmen*; Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, chs 4 and 5, esp. pp. 78–82; Nancy Bisaha, *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 15, 72–8, 134; E. Natalie Rothman, 'Self-Fashioning in the Mediterranean Contact Zone: Giovanni Battista Salvago and His *Africa Overo Barbaria* (1625)', in Konrad Eisenbichler (ed.), *Renaissance Medievalisms* (Essays and Studies, 18; Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2009), 123–43; Lucia Rostagno, *Mi faccio turco: Esperienze ed immagini dell'islam nell'Italia moderna* (Oriente Moderno, supplement no. 1; Studi e materiali sulla conoscenza dell'oriente in Italia, 4; Rome: Istituto per l'orienta C. A. Nallino, 1983), 76–7; Lester J. Libby, Jr., 'Venetian Views of the Ottoman Empire from the Peace of 1503 to the War of Cyprus', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 9 (1978), 103–26; C. A. Patrides, '“The Bloody and Cruell Turke”: The Background of a Renaissance Commonplace', *Studies in the Renaissance*, 10 (1963), 126–35.

²¹ Clarence Dana Rouillard, *The Turk in French History, Thought, and Literature (1520–1660)* (Études de Littérature Étrangère et Comparée; Paris: Boivin, 1938), 643–4; Matar, *Turks, Moors and Englishmen*, 78–81; Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, 16–24; Almut Höfert, *Den Feind beschreiben: 'Türkengefahr' und europäisches Wissen über das Osmanische Reich 1450–1600* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2003), 293–303; Bisaha, *Creating East and West*, 17–19; Matthew Dimmock, *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); Konrad, 'Turkish Menace', par. 16; James G. Harper (ed.), *The Turk and Islam in the Western Eye, 1450–1750:*

outright internal contradiction—so much so, in fact, that one cannot help the impression that his editor repeatedly intervened to counterbalance Wild's praise of the Ottomans.²² Yet even Zane showed a measure of compassion for the 'born Turks' who 'compared to the renegades were less melancholy and tyrannical because they also have some religion in them, which the others do not'.²³ His successor Simone Contarini went even further in praising born Muslims for 'not wanting to be very bad people' while firmly putting the blame for all sorts of cruelties and mismanagement on the converts in the Ottoman Elite.²⁴

The stereotypes with which Christian-European travellers had grown up unsurprisingly flew in the face of lived realities as they would be able to experience them during their sojourns in the Empire, but whether they seriously undermined the dominant discourse is far from clear. Embedded in assertions of 'Turkish' evilness, which are attributable to a mixture of self-censorship and editorial intervention, they remained ambiguous and could be read—or expounded, given the importance of the oral transmission of knowledge for the majority of people at the time—both as mere descriptions, which challenged the dehumanization of the arch enemy, and moral lessons, which reinforced the demands for piety in the face of God's scourge broadcast from the pulpits and in various broadsheets.²⁵

Finally, a central reason for the overwhelmingly negative depiction of the Ottomans in Christian-European discourse in general, not just that of the German-speaking lands, was that the Empire posed a serious challenge, not only militarily. After all, if Christendom failed to repel the Ottoman onslaught under the current religious, social, and political order, perhaps there was something fundamentally wrong with Christian doctrine and belief, the organization of society, and the distribution of power. On top of this, the advance of the Ottoman forces, and the corresponding distribution of spoils among the sultan's supporters, always posed the danger of exercising a strong pull which might make changing sides seem more profitable than staying put and possibly dying in defence of what appeared to be the weaker side in this struggle.²⁶

In spite of the 'bad press' given to renegades, however, the allure of conversion to Islam remained present even in the writings of those who denounced them. For even such dismissals for immorality as Mitrovic's portrayal of Cığalazade attested to

Visual Imagery before Orientalism (Transculturalisms, 1400–1700; Farnham: Ashgate, 2011); Kármán 'Turks Reconsidered'; Lisy-Wagner, *Czech Identity*, pp. 7–9, ch. 2.

²² Johannes Wild, *Neue Reysbeschreibung eines Gefangenen Christen* (Nuremberg, 1623). Interestingly, Höfert, *Den Feind beschreiben*, 300 does not even consider the possibility of editorial intervention. Compare Daniel J. Vitkus (ed.), *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption: Barbary Captivity Narratives from Early Modern England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 34.

²³ Firpo (ed.), *Relazioni*, xiii.253; Albèri (ed.), *Relazioni*, ix.389.

²⁴ Firpo (ed.), *Relazioni*, xiii.508–9, quotation from p. 508. A similar characterization of Ottoman society is also expressed in TNA, SP 97/3, fos. 202^v–203^r (Edward Barton to Sir Robert Cecil, Constantinople, 15/25 Aug. 1597), at fo. 203^r.

²⁵ Schulze, *Reich und Türkengefahr*, 21–46; Özyurt, *Türkenlieder*, 123–6, and, as an example, p. 186, song 13, stanza 4; Lisy-Wagner, *Czech Identity*, 5–6; Konrad, 'Turkish Menace', pars. 10, 12–16; Norton, 'Lust', 263; Fichtner, *Terror and Toleration*, 51–3.

²⁶ Schulze, *Reich und Türkengefahr*, 58–60; Rostagno, *Mi faccio turco*, 78; Lisy-Wagner, *Czech Identity*, 53–4.

the latter's influence, power, and wealth. And no matter how 'arrogant and evil' Matteo Zane considered renegades to be, he fully acknowledged renegades' success in this world as those who controlled 'the government, the wealth, and in conclusion the whole empire'.²⁷ Indeed, some authors alleged that the decision to convert had been taken solely out of a desire for monetary gain.²⁸ Against this background, it is noteworthy that the English playwright Robert Daborne wrote his drama *A Christian Turn'd Turke* (published in 1612) with the express purpose of countering the positive depiction of the English and Dutch pirates John Ward and Simon Dansiker who had both embraced Islam to operate out of North Africa and whose exploits generated considerable public attention in England through pamphlets and ballads. In these, the two men's wealth was a constant theme while their apostasy from Christianity and conversion to Islam remained generally unmentioned. Hence Daborne commented in the prologue to his play

What heretofore set other pennies aworke,
Was *Ward* turn'd Pyrate, ours is *Ward* turn'd Turke.

And unlike the popular pirate, '*Ward* turn'd Turke' was a Faustian persona who had sold his soul to the devil and was thus beyond redemption.²⁹

Ottomanists frequently point out that the category of the renegade is a purely Christian-European construction which has no counterpart in Ottoman Turkish.³⁰ Given the negative connotations associated with the word, particularly those of 'evil and treachery', this is hardly surprising. Why should the Ottomans treat those who had converted to Islam and thereby joined Ottoman Muslim society as outcasts? Surely, to quote Calloway once more, 'attitudes and suspicions determined who was labeled a renegade'.³¹

That the concept was not entirely incommensurable to an Ottoman point of view, however, is suggested by a conversation between Grand Vizier Sokollu Mehmed Paşa and the Imperial ambassador David Ungnad which took place in 1575. Earlier that year, the sultan had dispatched an envoy to Emperor Maximilian II in Prague. Soon after his arrival, the diplomat succumbed to his long illness.³²

²⁷ Firpo (ed.), *Relazioni*, xiii.253; Albèri (ed.), *Relazioni*, ix.389.

²⁸ Lisy-Wagner, *Czech Identity*, 64, 78.

²⁹ Robert Daborne, *A Christian Turn'd Turke, or, The Tragicall Lives and Deaths of the Two Famous Pyrates, Ward and Dansiker* (London, 1612), quotations from sig. A4^r; Matar, *Islam in Britain*, 50, 54–8; Matar, *Turks, Moors and Englishmen*, 61–2; Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, 145–52; Chew, *Crescent and Rose*, 347–62, esp. pp. 357–8 on contemporary publications.

³⁰ This is criticism expressed in conversations rather than in publications where those who distance themselves from the term tend to simply avoid it. For an exception, see Felix Konrad, 'Soziale Mobilität europäischer Renegaten im frühneuzeitlichen Osmanischen Reich', in Henning P. Jürgens and Thomas Weller (eds), *Religion und Mobilität: Zum Verhältnis von raumbezogener Mobilität und religiöser Identitätsbildung im frühneuzeitlichen Europa* (Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte, Mainz, Beiheft 81; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2010), 214 n. 4.

³¹ Calloway, 'Neither White nor Red', 44.

³² Pál Ács, 'Tarjumans Mahmud and Murad: Austrian and Hungarian Renegades as Sultan's Interpreters', in Bodo Guthmüller and Wilhelm Kühlmann (eds), *Europa und die Türken in der Renaissance* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2000), 311; HHStA, Türkei I, box 31, bundle for 1575 Apr., fos. 162^r–163^v ('De Morbi [*sic*] ac Mores [*sic*] genere D. legati Imp. Turcoru[m] brevis narratio'); *Stephan Gerlachs dess aeltern Tage-Buch* (Frankfurt, 1674), 91, 134.

While his death was unfortunate, it seems to have had little impact on diplomatic relations between the two empires. Nevertheless, Sokollu was concerned about the fates of those who had travelled abroad with the envoy. As Ungnad reports, 'he complained that many [of the envoy's] servants had stayed behind and reneged' and demanded that they be dismissed from the Imperial court 'so that the sultan would not get the wrong impression, if Your Majesty allowed them to stay at his court and in his territories'.³³ To what extent these words were truly Sokollu's, of course, is impossible to determine. How faithful was the translation of the interpreter who, although invisible in the source, was undoubtedly present at this meeting? And how exact was Ungnad's recollection of the actual words uttered? While these questions cannot be conclusively answered, the fact that Sokollu lodged a complaint of this sort does at least suggest that the Ottomans were not exactly indifferent to 'losing' their subjects to a political as well as religious rival and to the consequences which such movements of people might have. In fact, if we want to determine whether a category such as renegade was meaningful to the Ottomans, it makes little sense to look at those who converted *to* Islam but rather those who converted *away from* it. For, if anything emerges clearly from this examination of the meaning of the term, it is that, as a label, it was invariably applied by members of the community which the renegade was accused of having left.

By and large, of course, this sort of labelling ignores not only the perspectives of the renegades' new 'host' society but, crucially, those of renegades themselves. To begin with, the individuals accused of having left a given community may not have agreed that they had been part of it in the first place. And even if they did, they may not have shared the same sense of allegiance as those who deemed them to have betrayed it. In this sense, then, the term tells us more about the expectations of the people who used it than about the individuals whom it supposedly described.

In spite of its many problems and the moral and ideological baggage it carries, the term *renegade* retains enormous currency, even in historical scholarship. Its continued use is justified, as Felix Konrad has rightly pointed out, by the fact that it is the word most frequently used in the sources to refer to this phenomenon.³⁴ It is also—US television programmes and pop music notwithstanding—a term which still seems intuitive to readers. Most importantly, however, no other word manages to capture both the expectations and praxological realities of a step which may have had an act of religious conversion at its centre, but, in the religiously charged world of the early modern period, was also laden with political meaning. Early modern Europe was, after all, not the tolerant and secular society which it, by and large, has become today. Religion was not merely a private matter of individual conscience; it was communal. If, for example, an inhabitant of the city of Heidelberg wished to embrace Islam, he had no alternative to emigrating to the Ottoman Empire or another Muslim-ruled territory before practising his faith for fear of his life.

³³ HHStA, Türkei I, box 31, bundle for 1575 May–June, fos. 23^r–32^v (David Ungnad to Emperor Maximilian II, Constantinople, 14 May 1575), at fo. 25^v. Compare Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 134.

³⁴ Konrad, 'Soziale Mobilität', 213.

THE MAKE-UP OF THE OTTOMAN MILITARY-ADMINISTRATIVE ELITE

In the classical theory of Ottoman statecraft, Ottoman society was neatly divided into two classes, the *re'aya* and the *'askeri*. The former, literally the 'flock', encompassed the empire's 'ordinary' subjects—peasants, artisans, and merchants of any faith—who paid taxes to the Ottoman state. In return, the *re'aya* were protected by members of the second class, literally 'soldiers', who, as a general rule, were exempt from taxes. Although the name implies a strictly military class, the term is, in fact, a catch-all for those who 'formed the military and administrative backbone of the state'.³⁵

Consequently, the *'askeri* themselves were subdivided into different sections on the basis of profession and training, the 'men of the word' (Turkish: *'ilmiye*), the 'men of the pen' (*kalemiye*), and the 'men of the sword' (*seyfiye*). The first of these sections consisted of the religious scholars (*ulema*) trained in the religious colleges (*medrese*) of the Empire who became imams, teachers, judges, and jurists. Members of the *kalemiye*—Mustafa Ali being one of the most famous—often had a similar background, having received their education in the colleges unless they were apprenticed as scribes in the chanceries of the Porte or high-ranking officials serving it. But rather than progressing through the traditional *cursus honorum* for *ulema*, which might eventually see them appointed to one of the most prestigious *medreses* like that of Edirne or the office of the *şeyhülislam*, the Empire's highest legal and religious authority, men like Ali chose to enter the chanceries in Istanbul and the provinces to fill the demand for an ever increasing number of scribes and officials who had received legal training. As Cornell Fleischer has pointed out, as a distinct career line, the *kalemiye* emerged only in the middle of the sixteenth century in the wake of the administrative reforms which were part and parcel of the imperial consolidation during the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent.³⁶

It is the third section of the Ottoman elite, the 'men of the sword', however, who are of greatest interest to this study of Christian-European renegades. Indeed, *ulema* of convert origins are conspicuously absent from the sources underlying my study, even if those who sojourned the Ottoman realm certainly came into contact with members of the *'ilmiye*. Partly, this absence is explained by the strict separation between the career lines. In theory, at least, a religious scholar should not become a

³⁵ Cornell H. Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Âli (1541–1600)* (Princeton, NJ: PUP, 1986), 5–6, 18–19, quotation from p. 6; Bernard Lewis, 'Askari', in *EP*, vol. i (1960), p. 712; Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age, 1300–1600*, tr. Norman Itzkowitz and Colin Imber (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973), 68–9; Gilles Veinstein, 'Religious Institutions, Policies and Lives', in Suraiya N. Faruqi and Kate Fleet (eds), *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, ii: *The Ottoman Empire as a World Power, 1453–1603* (Cambridge: CUP, 2013), 326.

³⁶ Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual*, 7, 21–39. On the training and career paths of the *ulema*, see also Denise Klein, *Die osmanischen Ulema des 17. Jahrhunderts: Eine geschlossene Gesellschaft?* (Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, 274; Berlin: Schwarz, 2007), ch. 2; Madeline C. Zilfi, *The Politics of Piety: The Ottoman Ulema in the Postclassical Age (1600–1800)* (Minneapolis, MN: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1988), 57–61; Veinstein, 'Religious Institutions', 327–9, 332–4.

military-administrator while a soldier would not be considered for the post of a *kadı* or a professorship at a *medrese*. This separation was most of all an ideal and members of the *kalemiye*, in particular, managed to bridge the conceptual gap between the different career lines, for instance by receiving appointments as provincial governors. As far as the exclusion of fighting men from posts reserved for *ulema* is concerned, however, it remained effective for simple pragmatic reasons since few, if any, of the men who fought, commanded, and governed had the level of academic training required to expound scripture and Islamic law. When we consider that Ali began his education in Arabic and the fundamentals of Islamic theology at the age of 6 to enter the first level of *medrese* schools at 12, the by comparison relatively advanced age of Christian Europeans upon conversion to Islam must have presented an obstacle to advancing through the Ottoman education system and, in the vast majority of cases, barred them from entering it in the first place.³⁷

Two parallel and frequently overlapping systems regulated the relationship between members of the *seyfiye* and the sultan: the practices of allocating revenue grants to cavalymen (Turkish: *sipahi*) and high-ranking state officials serving in the provinces on the one hand, and the recruitment of slaves (*kul*) into the military and administration on the other.

The primary purpose of the *dirlik* or *timar* system was the maintenance of the provincial cavalry forces and the provincial administration of the Ottoman Empire. Under this system, cavalymen and provincial officials were allocated a prebend in return for military service. Such grants were known as *dirliks* (literally 'livelihood') and *timars* (variously translated as 'care, attention' and 'horse grooming') after the name of the smallest of such grants which would have been sufficient to support a single cavalryman and his horse. The recipients of such grants are generally referred to as *timar* holders or *timariots*.³⁸

Although often described as quasi-feudal, a *timar* grant was not a fief which bestowed ownership of the land on the *timariot*, but simply an entitlement to the revenue from taxes and fines from a given locality. The value of such grants, and thus the size of the locality, was determined by the *timar* holder's rank, with the largest category of grants, a *has*, generally reserved for provincial governors.³⁹

³⁷ Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual*, 21–2, 25–33. Zilfi, *Politics of Piety*, 57–61; Veinstein, 'Religious Institutions', 337; Klein, *Die osmanischen Ulema*, 46–7 and 166–91 on the porousness of the border between the career lines. Klein discusses two *ulema* of convert origins on pp. 188–91 but makes clear that these were exceptional. At least one of them, Ordu Kadısı İzmirî Efendi, who was originally from Crete, had converted to Islam while still a boy. Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople*, 114, also mentions a Genoese renegade who became a *kadı* in Tunis.

³⁸ Metin İ. Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550–1650* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 9–13; Halil İnalcık, 'Timâr', in *EP*, vol. x (2000), pp. 502, 505–6; C. E. Bosworth, 'Sipâhî: 1. In the Ottoman Empire', in *EP*, vol. ix (1997), p. 656; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300–1650: The Structure of Power* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 193–5; Norman Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire and Islamic Tradition* (pbk edn, Chicago, IL: UCP, 1980), 14–15, 40–1.

³⁹ İnalcık, *Ottoman Empire*, 108–10; Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, 9–14; İnalcık, 'Timâr', 503; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 193–4; Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire*, 44–9; Daniel Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe* (New Approaches to European History, 24; Cambridge: CUP, 2002), 81.

In the process, the sultan devolved some of his authority on the *timar* holders and their deputies (Turkish: *kahya*, *kethüda*) who were charged with collecting taxes and fines from the local population, overseeing their economic activities, and exercising powers of police. In this way, they served as local representatives of the Ottoman state. They did not, however, dispense justice. This was the preserve of the judges appointed by the Porte and recruited from among the *ulema*.⁴⁰ In addition, *dirlik* holders were expected to keep themselves and, depending on the value of their *dirliks*, a number of armed retainers equipped and ready to fight when the sultan demanded their presence on campaign. Failure to meet this military obligation could result in the revocation of the *timar* grant. Such dismissal from a *dirlik* did not automatically result in the dismissal of the man in question from the Ottoman military-administrative elite, however. In principle, as long as he continued to participate in military campaigns, he remained eligible for appointment to another grant. Only if he failed to participate in warfare for an extended period of time did he forfeit elite status and become part of the *re'aya* and thus liable to paying taxes. This, at least, was the ideal.⁴¹

Even while *timars*, unlike fiefs and venal offices in Christian Europe, were not hereditary in the technical sense throughout the sixteenth century, the sons of *timariots* generally became *timar* holders themselves. While this ensured a certain continuity, particularly in terms of military training, these sons did not normally succeed directly to their fathers' status, but began their careers on a lower level of the hierarchy before, as rewards for their services, they increased their own standing.⁴² In theory, it was also possible for *re'ayas* to enter the provincial cavalry as volunteers but this road seems to have begun to close down by the turn of the sixteenth century when the distinction between *re'aya* and *askeri* became more rigid.⁴³

In time, the *timariots* had also become religiously exclusive. While, in the wake of incorporating the newly conquered territories in the Balkans into their empire, the Ottomans had treated Christian local feudal lords as *timar* holders and thus incorporated them into the military-administrative elite without requiring them to embrace Islam, by the sixteenth century, as a general rule, members of the provincial cavalry were the sons of free Muslim parents. This development owed as much to the nature of Ottoman conquests in this period as to the Islamization of initially Christian *timar*-holding families. Nevertheless, there is some evidence that Christians continued to be appointed to *timars* as late as the mid-sixteenth century.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ İnalcık, *Ottoman Empire*, 104, 110, 117–18; Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, 8–12; İnalcık, 'Timâr', 503–5; Gyula Káldy Nagy, 'Kâdî: Ottoman Empire', in *EP*, vol. iv (1978), p. 375; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 194–6; Goffman, *Ottoman Empire*, 81; Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire*, 41, 47–8.

⁴¹ İnalcık, *Ottoman Empire*, 107–8, 113–15; Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, 24; İnalcık, 'Timâr', 505–6; Bosworth, 'Sipâhî', 656; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 196–8, 206–7; Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire*, 45.

⁴² İnalcık, *Ottoman Empire*, 115; Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, 24, 33–8; İnalcık, 'Timâr', 505–6; Bosworth, 'Sipâhî', 656; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 201–2; Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire*, 46–7; Goffman, *Ottoman Empire*, 81.

⁴³ Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, 35; İnalcık, *Ottoman Empire*, 115; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 202–3.

⁴⁴ İnalcık, 'Timâr', 505; Metin İ. Kunt, 'Transformation of Zimmi into Askerî', in Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (eds), *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a*

Even though the *timar* system was the backbone of the provincial administration and the Ottoman cavalry, *timar* holders included individuals of a wide variety of backgrounds. Even members of the Ottoman family and the sultan himself were the recipients of such revenue grants as, indeed, were a number of officials in the imperial administration in Istanbul, many of whom legally were the sultan's slaves.⁴⁵

These slaves, called *kuls* or, more specifically, *kapıkulus* (slaves of the Porte), were the product of a particular system of household slavery. Although historians have debated whether *slave* is indeed the best translation of the Ottoman word *kul*, advancing alternatives such as 'servitor', the system clearly had its origins in household slavery and those who fell into its purview legally remained slaves throughout their lives.⁴⁶ As a consequence, with a few important exceptions which will be discussed shortly, the *kapıkulu* were of non-Muslim parentage and themselves not Muslims at the time of enslavement since the shari'a prohibits the enslavement of Muslims.⁴⁷

While the *kul* system proper applied only to males, it was paralleled by the recruitment of female slaves into the harems of the sultan and Ottoman grandees as domestic servants, concubines, and potential wives. Admittedly, formal marriages of harem slaves to top officials or even the sultan were extremely rare. While Süleyman I and his son and successor Selim II did marry their favourites Hürrem and Nur Banu, respectively, this was an exception in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when most sultans did not marry at all. The highest-ranking members of the Ottoman military-administrative elite, moreover, generally wedded members of the sultan's family or that of their immediate patrons. Manumitted harem slaves, therefore, most frequently became wives of followers and officials of the second rank. When they did so, however, they, in turn, became heads of harems in their

Plural Society, 2 vols (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1982), i.55, 57, 58–60, 63–4; Tijana Krstić, 'Conversion', in *EOE*, 146; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 200; Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire*, 17–18, 41; Goffman, *Ottoman Empire*, 83.

⁴⁵ Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, 13, 33; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 200–1, 212–13; Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire*, 44–5.

⁴⁶ İnalcık, *Ottoman Empire*, 87; V. L. Ménage, 'Some Notes on the *devshirme*', *Bulletin of SOAS*, 29 (1966), esp. 66, 70; Y. Hakan Erdem, *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire and Its Demise, 1800–1909* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), 6–11; Ehud R. Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition in the Ottoman Middle East* (Publications on the Near East; Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998), 21–4; Toledano, *As If Silent and Absent: Bonds of Enslavement in the Islamic Middle East* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 20–1; Metin İ. Kunt, 'Royal and Other Households', in Christine Woodhead (ed.), *The Ottoman World* (The Routledge Worlds; London: Routledge, 2012), 105–6; Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, 40–2; Kunt, 'Ottoman White Eunuchs as Palace Officials and Statesmen (1450–1600)', in Stefan Hanß and Juliane Schiel (eds), *Mediterranean Slavery Revisited (500–1800)/ Neue Perspektiven auf mediterrane Sklaverei (500–1800)* (Zurich: Chronos, 2014), 332–5; Suraiya N. Faruqi, *Kultur und Alltag im Osmanischen Reich: Vom Mittelalter bis zum Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: Beck, 1995), 42; Goffman, *Ottoman Empire*, 60, 65; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 148; Godfrey Goodwin, *The Janissaries* (pbk edn, London: Saqi Books, 2006), 42; Rhoads Murphey, *Exploring Ottoman Sovereignty: Tradition, Image, and Practice in the Ottoman Imperial Household, 1400–1800* (London: Continuum, 2008), 136–7.

⁴⁷ Joseph Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (2nd edn, Oxford: OUP, 1966), 127; Erdem, *Slavery*, 20–6; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 130–1; Joshua Michael White, 'Catch and Release: Piracy, Slavery, and Law in the Early Modern Ottoman Mediterranean', PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 2012, ch. 3; Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire*, 49.

own right. So did concubines like Safiye who, on the death of Murad III and the accession of her son Mehmed III, obtained pride of place as the *valide sultan*, the mother of the reigning monarch.⁴⁸

In the Ottoman Empire, slave status was not incompatible with economic, political, and military power, though. In this respect, the Islamic model of slavery was much closer to the Graeco-Roman system than the Atlantic one, designed, as it was, to obtain cheap and expendable labour to cultivate massive plantations, which so much dominates our conception of slavery today.⁴⁹ In the Ottoman Empire, female as well as male slaves often wielded considerable authority and even economic independence within the scope of their masters' households.

Take the example of Johannes Wild. Wild had been taken captive by Ottoman soldiers in 1604, at the age of 19, while serving as a *Landsknecht* (infantryman) with the Habsburg forces in Hungary. He was enslaved and sold several times before he ended up in Cairo where his master eventually manumitted him in 1609. Even before his manumission, so Wild tells his readers,

I . . . could indeed earn money while I was with this [i.e. his seventh] master for he had to administer many villages and several hundred Arabic peasants under him. From those I had to collect the tithe and rent . . . My master gave me four fields to cultivate. The profits I derived from them were to be mine. I was to either work the fields myself or lease them to some peasants. When I was at [my master's] house and had nothing to do for him I engaged in trade.⁵⁰

After manumission, the proceeds which Wild had thus derived from agriculture and trade enabled him to travel to Istanbul from whence he eventually returned to his native Nuremberg.⁵¹

Wild was certainly extremely lucky with this master but other slaves had similar experiences. When war broke out between Ottomans and Habsburgs in 1593, the Bohemian Václav Vratislav of Mitrovic, who had travelled to Istanbul in the entourage of the Habsburg ambassador Friedrich von Kreckwitz, was imprisoned along with the other members of the embassy. Thus a state prisoner rather than a privately owned slave, Mitrovic, too, recounted that he was able to earn a little money by knitting 'stockings, gloves, and Turkish hats' during his imprisonment in the *tersane*, the Ottoman arsenal in what is now the neighbourhood of Kasımpaşa

⁴⁸ Leslie P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (Studies in Middle Eastern History; New York: OUP, 1993), 62–3 (Hürrem Sultan's wedding), 93–4 (Nur Banu's wedding), 113–18 (on the problem of sources), 126–8 (on the status of *valide sultan* and *haseki*), 139–43 (harem training); Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition*, 25, 29–31.

⁴⁹ Erdem, *Slavery*, 7–8; Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition*, 155–68; Toledano, *As If Silent and Absent*, ch. 1; Nur Sobers-Khan, *Slaves without Shackles: Forced Labour and Manumission in the Galata Court Registers, 1560–1572* (Studien zur Sprache, Geschichte und Kultur der Türkvolker, 20; Berlin: Schwarz, 2014), 45–7; Goffman, *Ottoman Empire*, 67–9.

⁵⁰ Wild, *Neue Reysbeschreibung*, sig. U^v. Compare Robert C. Davis, *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters: White Slavery in the Mediterranean, the Barbary Coast, and Italy, 1500–1800* (pbk edn, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 71–2; Suraiya N. Faruqi, *The Ottoman Empire and the World around It* (pbk edn, London: I. B. Tauris, 2006), 121–32.

⁵¹ Wild, *Neue Reysbeschreibung*, sigs. X^v–li iv^r.

in Istanbul.⁵² Even galley slaves on pirate vessels might occasionally be granted a share in the booty.⁵³ This is not to belittle the plight of many slaves who were put to work in agriculture, mining, construction, and at the oars. It is fair to say that, by comparison, domestic slaves such as Wild generally had a less arduous life. Nevertheless, they were, of course, slaves and as such had little power to determine their own fates or even protect and control their own bodies in an environment in which corporeal punishment for perceived misbehaviour was the norm and in which female slaves, in particular but not exclusively, could freely be used for their masters' sexual gratification.⁵⁴

Even Wild experienced rough times. Throughout his memoirs he bitterly complains about his sixth master who, he claims, treated him very badly. While this rather poor relationship may have had a lot to do with the young German's quarrelsome nature and bad temper, the ways in which the two slave owners treated him may also be related to their different statuses within Ottoman society. Wild's sixth master was a merchant and thus a member of the *re'aya*. His seventh master, however, as a local commander of the janissaries, was a member of the Ottoman military-administrative elite.⁵⁵ In granting Wild such authority and economic freedom, this master's treatment of his slave, therefore, was probably more strongly influenced by the system of *kul* household slavery epitomized by the sultan's household. Having said this, the importance of class differences between the two owners in this respect must not be overstretched. Not only was it common practice to remunerate slaves for their services, even if at lower rates than free employees, 'skilled slaves [also] became factotums for their masters, often representing them in commerce and trade'.⁵⁶

As a consequence, an individual's legal status as a slave was frequently not so much an obstacle to social and political standing but rather the source of that very status. Infinitely more important than freedom in determining prestige was proximity to figures of authority and, ultimately, the sultan. As members of the sultan's household—and technically his personal property—his slaves were very close to the Empire's ultimate source of political power, indeed.⁵⁷

⁵² Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures*, 133. See also Michael Heberer, *Aegyptiaca servitus* (Heidelberg, 1610), 153–4, 159, 163. On the location of the arsenal, see Colin Imber, 'Tersâne', in *IEP*, vol. x (2000), p. 420.

⁵³ Davis, *Christian Slaves*, 81–2.

⁵⁴ On the use of slave labour and slaves' living conditions see Davis, *Christian Slaves*, chs 3 and 4; Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition*, chs 1–3; Toledano, *As If Silent and Absent*, 12–15; Colley, *Captives*, 59–63; Eric R. Dursteler, 'Slavery and Sexual Peril in the Early Modern Mediterranean', in Hanß and Schiel (eds), *Mediterranean Slavery Revisited*, 473–99.

⁵⁵ Wild, *Neue Reysbeschreibung*, sigs. G iii^v and U^v.

⁵⁶ Suraiya N. Faruqi, *Towns and Townsmen of Ottoman Anatolia: Trade, Crafts and Food Production in an Urban Setting, 1520–1650* (Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization; Cambridge: CUP, 1984), 279; Yvonne J. Seng, 'Fugitives and Factotums: Slaves in Early Sixteenth-Century Istanbul', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 39 (1996), 144; Seng, 'A Liminal State: Slavery in Sixteenth-Century Istanbul', in Shaun E. Marmon (ed.), *Slavery in the Islamic Middle East* (Princeton, NJ: Wiener, 1999), 30, quotation from this page; İnalcık, *Ottoman Empire*, 87–8; Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition*, ch. 1; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 130.

⁵⁷ Peirce, *Imperial Harem*, 9–12; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 148.

When the Venetian *bailo* Matteo Zane and the English ambassador Edward Barton remarked on the importance of those they called renegades in defending, expanding, and governing the realm of the Ottoman sultan, they were implicitly referring to the very real prominence in terms of status as well as numbers of the sultan's *kuls*. Indeed, of the twenty-six grand viziers who served between 1500 and 1600, a mere four were born to Muslim parents.⁵⁸ One such *kul*-convert grand vizier was Sokollu Mehmed Paşa. Born to a Christian family in the Bosnian village of Sokolovići from which his epithet (Turkish: *nisbe*) is derived, he was recruited for training in the school of the sultan's palace in Edirne, in the process of which he converted to Islam and took the name Mehmed.⁵⁹

Institutionally, the *kul* system was closely linked to the practice of recruiting boys and young adults from among the Empire's Christian populations in the Balkans called *devşirme* (literally, collection) in Ottoman Turkish which is better known—and infamous—as the 'boy levy' or 'boy tax' in non-Ottoman sources as well as Western scholarship.⁶⁰ Balkan nationalist historiography in particular has frequently represented the *devşirme* as an instrument of Ottoman oppression by which the state attempted, through forced conversions, to eradicate local Christian identities.⁶¹

Until it was effectively abandoned in the seventeenth century, the Ottoman state periodically, but irregularly, conducted such levies among the Christian populations in the Balkans and Anatolia. Recruitment in the provinces was usually entrusted to an officer of the janissaries and followed strict rules of procedure and selection. Typically, the children and young adults of a given locality would be assembled, accompanied by their fathers. The selection officer, under the supervision of the local judge and in the presence of the local priests who were also expected to present the baptismal registers for inspection, would then select the

⁵⁸ This survey is based on İsmail Hâmi Danişmend, *Osmanlı Devlet Erkânı* (Istanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1971), 12–27 (entries no. 22–62). I have assumed that individuals born in areas of predominantly Muslim populations had at least a Muslim father and should therefore be counted as born Muslims. Compare similar surveys in Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 124; Michael Ursinus, 'Großwesir', in Edgar Hösch, Karl Nehring, and Holm Sundhaussen (eds), *Lexikon zur Geschichte Südosteuropas* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2004), 264.

⁵⁹ Gilles Veinstein, 'Sokollu Mehmed Paşa', in *EP*, vol. ix (1997), p. 706.

⁶⁰ V. L. Ménage, 'Devşirme', in *EP*, vol. ii (1965), pp. 210–11; Basile D. Papoulia, *Ursprung und Wesen der 'Knabenlese' im osmanischen Reich* (Südosteuropäische Arbeiten, 59; Munich: Oldenbourg, 1963); Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire*, 49–50.

⁶¹ See, for example, the historiographical discussions in Antonina Zhelyazkova, 'Islamization in the Balkans as an Historiographical Problem: The Southeast-European Perspective', in Fikret Adanir and Suraiya N. Faruqi (eds), *The Ottomans and the Balkans: A Discussion of Historiography* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 25; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 259–61, 265; Anton Minkov, *Conversion to Islam in the Balkans: Kisve Bahası Petitions and Ottoman Social Life* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 30; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 64–92; Maria Todorova, 'Conversion to Islam as a Trope in Bulgarian Historiography, Fiction and Film', in Maria Todorova (ed.), *Balkan Identities* (London: Hurst, 2004), 129–57; Bojan Aleksov, 'Adamant and Treacherous: Serbian Historians on Religious Conversion', in Pal Kolstø (ed.), *Myths and Boundaries in South-Eastern Europe* (London: Hurst, 2005), 158–90; Selim Deringil, *Conversion and Apostasy in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: CUP, 2012), 5–6.

ablest among those of eligible age, have them recorded in the recruitment register, and send them to Istanbul.⁶²

What ages were, in fact, considered eligible is somewhat unclear since the sources contain widely divergent figures, ranging from as little as eight to as much as twenty years. Ottoman texts indicate, however, that in the seventeenth century at least, individuals in their late teens were preferred over children, an indication corroborated by the biography of Sokollu Mehmed Paşa.⁶³ In addition, boys who had already been married, only-sons, orphans, and 'boys with trades vital to the local economy' were exempt from the *devşirme*.⁶⁴

Once in Istanbul, the recruits were mustered once again. The ablest and best looking were sent to the palace schools for training and would continue to fill high-ranking positions within the palace household and, later on, the imperial administration.⁶⁵ Examples of such careers abound throughout the sixteenth century and include, in addition to the above-mentioned Sokollu Mehmed Paşa, his predecessors as grand vizier Rüstem Paşa and Semiz Ali Paşa as well the grand admiral (*kapudan paşa*) Piyale Paşa.⁶⁶ The remaining youths were hired out to Muslim, Turkish-speaking farmers in Anatolia and Rumelia where they were to familiarize themselves with the Turkish language, Turkish customs, and Islam. As openings became available, these recruits were recalled to enter the *acemi oca*, a special corps in which they received military training and from which they would eventually graduate to one of the sultan's household cavalry regiments or the janissaries.⁶⁷

Throughout the process of recruitment and selection, the officials charged with these duties relied on the lore of physiognomy. Although dismissed as a pseudoscience today, Ottoman officials took the belief that physical appearance reflected character traits as well as providing indicators of what sorts of tasks an individual might be suited for very seriously. For certain duties such as service in the sultan's household, moreover, it was important that candidates met certain aesthetic requirements.⁶⁸

⁶² Ménage, 'Devşirme', 211–12; İnalçık, *Ottoman Empire*, 78; Sugar, *Southeastern Europe*, 55–6; Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire*, 49–51; Goffman, *Ottoman Empire*, 67; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 13–87; Goodwin, *Janissaries*, 28, 35–6.

⁶³ Ménage, 'Devşirme', 211; İnalçık, *Ottoman Empire*, 78; Gábor Ágoston, 'Devşirme (Devshirme)', in *EOE*, 185; Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire*, 50; Goodwin, *Janissaries*, 36; Veinstein, 'Sokollu Mehmed Paşa', 706. Contrast Robert Mantran, 'Ali Paşa Semiz', in *EP*, vol. i (1960), p. 398.

⁶⁴ Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire*, 50; İnalçık, *Ottoman Empire*, 78; Sugar, *Southeastern Europe*, 56; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 135–6; Goodwin, *Janissaries*, 34; Kunt, 'Households', 106.

⁶⁵ On palace education, see Barnette Miller, *The Palace School of Muhammad the Conqueror* (Harvard Historical Monographs, 17; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1941); Gülru Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power: The Topkapı Palace in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), ch. 6; İnalçık, *Ottoman Empire*, 79–80; Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire*, 51; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 138, 149–53; Goodwin, *Janissaries*, 30, 37–8, 43–53; Kunt, 'Households', 107–8.

⁶⁶ Christine Woodhead, 'Rüstem Paşa', in *EP*, vol. viii (1995), p. 640; Mantran, 'Ali Paşa Semiz'; Franz Babinger, 'Piyale Paşa', in *EP*, vol. viii (1995), p. 316.

⁶⁷ H. Bowen, 'Adjamî Oghlân', in *EP*, vol. i (1960), pp. 206–7; Ménage, 'Devşirme', 211; İnalçık, *Ottoman Empire*, 78–9; Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire*, 51; Erdem, *Slavery*, 8–9; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 138–40; Goodwin, *Janissaries*, 38–9.

⁶⁸ Ménage, 'Devşirme', 211; İnalçık, *Ottoman Empire*, 79; Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire*, 51; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 138; Goodwin, *Janissaries*, 37; Kunt, 'Ottoman White Eunuchs', 326–7. For a recent discussion of the importance of physiognomy in the Ottoman Empire, see Nur Sobers-Khan,

Soon after their arrival in the Ottoman capital, and before they were allocated for training, the boys and young men converted to Islam.⁶⁹ While the conversion of those recruited was clearly built into the system, the extent to which these conversions were forced, as is often claimed, is not quite clear. Contemporary Greek sources suggest that recruits occasionally tried to escape their conscription by running away, but would resign themselves to their fate once they learned that severe punishments, particularly torture, were meted out to their parents.⁷⁰ More sympathetic Ottomanists, however, prefer to remain silent on this question, restricting themselves to the use of the passive voice in saying that these boys and young men 'were converted' without, however, explicitly commenting on whether force was involved or even whether recruits resisted.⁷¹

It is fair to assume that conversion was often less than fully voluntary, although the 'compensations' offered by the careers which the boys would subsequently have embarked on may have acted as powerful incentives.⁷² In addition, it seems reasonable to expect that potential candidates for recruitment through the *devşirme* who displayed a marked reluctance to conversion and service in the Ottoman army and administration would not have been drafted in the first place, either because they found ways of ensuring that they would be ineligible, for instance by marrying early, or because recruiters would have been inclined to pass over those who promised to be troublemakers.⁷³ That recruitment as part of the *devşirme* could be seen as a privilege, rather than a burden, is evident from the recorded instances of families attempting to bribe officials to draft their sons as well as the oft-cited requests of Bosnian Muslims that their children would be eligible for recruitment in spite of their Muslim faith.⁷⁴

As a measure of Islamizing the Christian populations of the Balkans, moreover, the system was utterly inappropriate because the number of men thus recruited was never enough to tilt the balance in itself, especially since the recruits were moved away from their homes for training and, once that was completed, their assignments might take them all over the vast Empire. It seems that, on average, only one youth per every forty households was drafted in any given tax district during each levy. Even other estimates, according to which a total of up to 8,000 boys may have been drafted at any one time, appear relatively modest, especially so in light of the fact that recruitment was not carried out annually.⁷⁵

'*Firāsetle nazar edesin*: Recreating the Gaze of the Ottoman Slave Owner at the Confluence of Textual Genres', in Firges et al. (eds), *Well-Connected Domains*, ch. 6.

⁶⁹ Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire*, 51; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 138.

⁷⁰ Papoulia, 'Knabenlese', 114.

⁷¹ See, for instance, Goffman, *Ottoman Empire*, 67–8; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 138–9.

⁷² Goffman, *Ottoman Empire*, 68; İnalçık, *Ottoman Empire*, 78; Claire Norton, 'Conversion to Islam in the Ottoman Empire', *Wiener Zeitschrift zur Geschichte der Neuzeit*, 7 (2007), 28–9.

⁷³ Ménage, 'Devşirme', 211; Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire*, 50.

⁷⁴ Ménage, 'Devşirme', 211; Goffman, *Ottoman Empire*, 68; Goodwin, *Janissaries*, 35; Kunt, 'Households', 106; Kunt, 'Zimmi into Askeri', 61; Sugar, *Southeastern Europe*, 58; Norton, 'Conversion', 29.

⁷⁵ Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire*, 50; Papoulia, 'Knabenlese', 60–1; Ménage, 'Notes on the *devşirme*', 77; İnalçık, *Ottoman Empire*, 78; Sugar, *Southeastern Europe*, 55–6; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 135; Goodwin, *Janissaries*, 35.

On the whole, it is fair to conceptualize the *devşirme* as a form of conscription by which the Ottoman state levied much needed personnel for its armies and government apparatus. This much is also suggested by the fact that, like other non-Muslim subjects (Turkish: *zimmi*, Arabic: *dhimmi*) providing military services to the Ottoman state, the families of these recruits were exempted from the *cizye* (Arabic: *jizya*), the poll tax levied on the non-Muslim subjects of the sultan.⁷⁶ Since the *devşirme* recruited almost exclusively from among the Christian population, however, it was and still is easily representable as a means of religious oppression. This image has been put to effective use in Christian-European and, later, Balkan nationalist propaganda.

The precise origin of the *devşirme* as a system of conscription from among Ottoman subjects is still a matter of debate, although evidence suggests that it was practised as early as the late fourteenth century.⁷⁷ Perhaps the greatest puzzle surrounds the origin of the idea for such a levy. As many historians have pointed out, the *devşirme* directly contravenes of shari'a law which clearly forbids the enslavement of the non-Muslim subjects of a Muslim ruler. In this context, the conundrum of how the institution might be squared with Islamic law is less important than the fact that it was apparently never seriously challenged on legal grounds.⁷⁸

In any case, there is evidence that the term *devşirme* itself had been used before the conscription of non-Muslim subjects in connection with the janissary infantry (Turkish: *yeniçeri*, literally 'new troops') created during the reign of Orhan (1326–62), the son of the near legendary founder of the Ottoman dynasty. Initially, it seems to have referred to the selection of suitable men for this new infantry corps from among the ruler's share in the captives taken by those who fought on his behalf, the so-called *pencik* (literally 'one fifth'). Recruitment from among the pool of slaves naturally included those men whom the sultan's household had acquired by purchase or as gifts. Although, judging from the biographies of high-ranking Ottoman officials, the conscription of Ottoman subjects soon numerically outclassed recruitment from among the Empire's slave population, the latter source of manpower remained relevant throughout the period under discussion in this book, as is illustrated, for example, by Cığalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa's career examined in Chapter 4.⁷⁹ The girls and women of the harems, on the other hand, were almost exclusively from non-Ottoman origins since there was no comparable institution for recruitment from the Ottoman non-Muslim female

⁷⁶ Ménage, 'Notes on the *devşirme*', 78; C. Cahen, Halil İnalcık, and P. Hardy, 'Djizya', in *EP*, vol. ii (1965), pp. 559–67.

⁷⁷ Ménage, 'Devşirme', 210–11; İnalcık, *Ottoman Empire*, 78; Sugar, *Southeastern Europe*, 55; Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire*, 49; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 134–5.

⁷⁸ Kunt, 'Zimmi into Askeri', 60–1; Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, 32; Erdem, *Slavery*, 1–6; Papoulia, 'Knabenlese', 42–7; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 134.

⁷⁹ Rhoads Murphey, 'Yeni Çeri', in *EP*, vol. xi (2002), pp. 322–3; C. E. Bosworth et al., 'Pendjik', in *EP*, vol. viii (1995), p. 293; İnalcık, *Ottoman Empire*, 78; Sugar, *Southeastern Europe*, 55; Erdem, *Slavery*, 19–20; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 131–4, 148; Goodwin, *Janissaries*, 27, 32–3. On the coexistence of *devşirme*, *pencik*, and other forms of slave recruitment, see Papoulia, 'Knabenlese', 10–11, 59.

population. In addition, the general exclusion of freeborn Muslim women stands in marked contrast to the increasing admission of born Muslim males into the ranks of the *kuls*, especially from the seventeenth century onwards.⁸⁰

As far as the male section of the Ottoman military-administrative elite was concerned, the creation of the janissaries certainly represents the crucial moment in the ascendancy of the *kul* system. The new infantry was set up to provide a salaried standing army which would be personally loyal to Orhan and, in time, his successors who came to style themselves as sultans.⁸¹ While immediate inspiration came from the Seljuks of Rum who had previously ruled over large parts of Anatolia, slave armies had been formed as early as the ninth century by the 'Abbasid caliphs in Baghdad and the 'Umayyads of the Iberian Peninsula. First experiments with slave bodyguards may even date as far back as the reign of the caliph 'Uthmān (644–56). In the course of the Middle Ages, moreover, slave dynasties, known as Mamluks (from an Arabic word for slave), established themselves in the north of the Indian subcontinent and in Egypt. The latter indeed was one of the Ottoman Empire's greatest rivals in the Middle East until the eventual conquest of their territories in Syria, Arabia, and Egypt during the reign of Sultan Selim I.⁸² The particular appeal of slave troops stemmed from the belief that their loyalty was ensured by 'a simple fusion of . . . servile status and alien origin' which deprived them of all ties except those to their master. Since the *kul* system was initially created as a counterweight to the voluntary service of Turkmen fighters under the command of semi-independent frontier lords, Lewis A. Coser's conclusion that, by relying on such 'aliens', the Ottoman dynasty sought 'to maximize . . . [its] autonomy in the face of feudal, bureaucratic, or other impediments' is certainly correct, even if it is a misleading description of the system's practical workings in the following centuries.⁸³

Although Patricia Crone has dismissed the conversion to Islam of such *mamlūks*, *ghulāms*, and *kuls*—as they were known in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish, respectively—as 'rarely more than a formality', at least to the Ottomans, who seem to have insisted on the conversion of those who joined the janissaries from the outset, it was important, both as a symbol of loyalty to the Islamic masters they

⁸⁰ Peirce, *Imperial Harem*, 142–3.

⁸¹ Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, 32–3; Kunt, 'Zimmi into Askeri', 58; Goffman, *Ottoman Empire*, 67–8. On the change of title, see Caroline Finkel, *Osman's Dream: The Story of the Ottoman Empire, 1300–1923* (London: Murray, 2006), 9–10; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 13.

⁸² On the precedents for slave armies, see Reuven Amitai, 'The Mamluk Institution: 1000 Years of Military Slavery in the Islamic World', in Philip Morgan and Christopher Brown (eds), *Arming Slaves: From Classical Times to the Modern Age* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), 40–78; İnalcık, *Ottoman Empire*, 77–8; Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, 32; Patricia Crone, *Slaves on Horses: The Evolution of the Islamic Polity* (Cambridge: CUP, 1980), esp. ch. 10; Papoulia, 'Knabenlese', 12–23; Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire*, 49; Murphey, 'Yeñi Çeri', 322; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 130–1; Goodwin, *Janissaries*, 42–3. For the Ottoman conquest of the Mamluk sultanate of Egypt, Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 46–7; Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, 108–12.

⁸³ Crone, *Slaves on Horses*, 74, first quotation from this page; Lewis A. Coser, 'The Alien as a Servant of Power: Court Jews and Christian Renegades', *American Sociological Review*, 27 (1972), 574–81, second quotation from p. 580. See also İnalcık, *Ottoman Empire*, 77, 80; Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, 32–3; Erdem, *Slavery*, 9; Goodwin, *Janissaries*, 33; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 130, 319.

served, and as a reinforcement of the increasingly self-consciously Islamic ideology of the still-expanding Ottoman Empire.⁸⁴ In this context, the existence of the *devşirme* alongside recruitment from among the sultan's slaves and, indeed, their convergence after the recruits had entered the sultan's household is noteworthy because it underlines the rationale of the *kul* system. As far as the Ottoman state, and thus the sultan, was concerned, it did not matter whether an *'askeri* had originally been a subject of the sultan or a foreigner. What did matter was that he declared his loyalty to the Ottoman dynasty through conversion to Islam.⁸⁵

This insistence on religious homogeneity in the composition of the body of *kuls* serving the sultan in itself represents a marked departure from the religious inclusiveness which had characterized the first century or so of Ottoman expansion. The incorporation of Christian noblemen as *timar*-holding cavalrymen in the Balkans has already been noted. And even the frontier raiders themselves, who formed the backbone of Ottoman expansion and were ultimately responsible for sustaining near ceaseless petty warfare along the Empire's borders with Christendom until the turn of the seventeenth century, were initially more religiously heterogeneous than the common characterization of the Empire as an Islamic state seems to imply to those unfamiliar with the Islamic model of statecraft.⁸⁶

The persistence of this misconception owes not least to the famous *gazi* thesis proposed by Paul Wittek in the 1930s. According to his view, throughout its existence, the Ottoman Empire's driving force had been the pursuit of holy war (Arabic: *jihād*, Turkish: *cihad*) against its Christian neighbours. Consequently, even the empire's earliest expansion was driven by a group of raiders and warriors united by their shared Islamic ideology.⁸⁷ While Wittek's view has been corrected by research undertaken in the last three decades, the myth has proven resilient, precisely because it seems to confirm the clash-of-civilizations view of the Muslim-Christian encounter which continues to be invoked time and again as a powerful rallying cry. The early Empire, however, was almost certainly built not by a group of religiously zealous warriors, but rather, as Rudi Lindner has suggested, by a confederation of tribes held together by shared needs for pastures and booty.

⁸⁴ Crone, *Slaves on Horses*, 79, quotation from this page; Isom-Verhaaren, 'Shifting Identities'; Isom-Verhaaren, *Allies with the Infidel*, 58, 81; Will Smiley, 'The Meaning of Conversion: Treaty Law, State Knowledge, and Religious Identity among Russian Captives in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire', *International History Review*, 34 (2012), 560–1. On the role of Islam in Ottoman imperial ideology, see Colin Imber, 'Ideals and Legitimation in Early Ottoman History', in Metin İ. Kunt and Christine Woodhead (eds), *Süleyman the Magnificent and His Age: The Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern World* (Harlow: Longman, 1995), 138–53; Imber, 'Frozen Legitimacy', in Hakan T. Karateke and Maurus Reinkowski (eds), *Legitimizing the Order: The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 34; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 100; Murphey, *Ottoman Sovereignty*, ch. 3, esp. pp. 96–8. Imber and Murphey both emphasize that Islam was only one pillar of Ottoman claims to legitimacy and by no means central to Ottoman expansion from the outset as once claimed by Paul Wittek.

⁸⁵ İnalçık, *Ottoman Empire*, 80.

⁸⁶ Lowry, *Nature*, chs 6–7; Kunt, 'Zimmi into *Askeri*', 55–7, 59–60; Lindner, *Nomads and Ottomans*, 4–5; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 254, 260–5.

⁸⁷ For Wittek's exposition of the *gazi* thesis first published in 1938, see Paul Wittek, *The Rise of the Ottoman Empire: Studies in the History of Turkey, Thirteenth–Fifteenth Centuries*, ed. Colin Heywood (Royal Asiatic Society Books; London: Routledge, 2012).

As a unifying factor, religion played only a minor role and there is evidence to suggest that not all of those who joined the Ottoman cause, certainly during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, shared in the Ottoman family's religion.⁸⁸

Against this background, the creation of the *kul* corps presented a significant departure from the early Ottoman enterprise not merely because its members were the sultan's slaves, but also because those slaves had to undergo conversion to Islam. This latter principle, along with the idea of at least nominal *kul* status, was gradually extended to membership in the Ottoman military-administrative elite as a whole. This initial Islamization of the elite established and deepened the association between political loyalty to the sultan and adherence to a specific faith which provided the basis for later initiatives aiming at the religious homogenization of this group in a way which bears striking similarity to processes of confessionalization in parts of Christian Europe, particularly some of the many principalities of the Holy Roman Empire in whose context Wolfgang Reinhard and Heinz Schilling initially developed the concept. Admittedly, such efforts were more limited in scope in the Ottoman Empire, aiming at the elite rather than the population as a whole. Yet the effects of inclusion and exclusion from the exercise of political power in the face of an imperial population in which, even in the sixteenth century, Muslims did not form a decisive majority across the sultan's domains are comparable.⁸⁹

MERITOCRACY, HOUSEHOLDS, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF CONNECTIONS

The generally very humble origins of those who climbed to the highest heights in the military-administrative hierarchy of the Ottoman Empire fascinated contemporary Christian-European observers. Reporting on an audience with Süleyman the

⁸⁸ Lindner, *Nomads and Ottomans*, esp. ch. 1. See also the detailed critique of Wittek's thesis in Lowry, *Nature*; Murphey, *Ottoman Sovereignty*, 45–56. Note the apparent parallels to the Arab expansion in the first century after Muhammad's death. Robert Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam* (Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam, 13; Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 1997), 553–9; Hoyland, 'New Documentary Texts and the Early Islamic State', *Bulletin of SOAS*, 69 (2006), 409–10.

⁸⁹ Heinz Schilling, 'Confessionalization: Historical and Scholarly Perspectives of a Comparative and Interdisciplinary Paradigm', in John M. Headley, Hans J. Hillebrand, and Anthony J. Papalas (eds), *Confessionalization in Europe, 1555–1700: Essays in Honor and Memory of Bodo Nischan* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 21–35; Thomas A. Brady, 'Confessionalization: The Career of a Concept', in Headley, Hillebrand, and Papalas (eds), *Confessionalization in Europe*, 1–20; Jörg Deventer, '"Confessionalization"—A Useful Concept for the Study of Religion, Politics, and Society in Early Modern East-Central Europe?', *European Review of History/Revue Européenne d'Histoire*, 11 (2004), 403–25; Tijana Krstić, 'Illuminated by the Light of Islam and the Glory of the Ottoman Sultanate: Self-Narratives of Conversion to Islam in the Age of Confessionalization', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 51 (2009), 35–65; Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, esp. pp. 12–16, 96–7, 167–74; E. Natalie Rothman, *Brokering Empire: Trans-Imperial Subjects between Venice and Istanbul* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), 21–2; Judith Pfeiffer, 'Confessional Polarization in the 17th Century Ottoman Empire and Yūsuf İbn Ebî 'Abdū'd-Deyyān's *Keşfü'l-Esrār Fi İlzāmī'l-Yahūd Ve'l-Ahbār*', in Camilla Adang and Sabine Schmidtke (eds), *Contacts and Controversies between Muslims, Jews and Christians in the Ottoman Empire and Pre-Modern Iran* (Würzburg: Ergon, 2010), 18. I am indebted to Thomas Maissen for bringing Pfeiffer's essay to my attention.

Magnificent, the famous Habsburg ambassador Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq remarked,

Those who receive the highest offices from the Sultan are for the most part the sons of shepherds or herdsmen, and so far from being ashamed of their parentage, they actually glory in it, and consider it a matter of boasting that they owe nothing to the accident of birth.⁹⁰

Busbecq's observation is certainly accurate in so far as the *devşirme*, as a rule, was performed almost exclusively among rural populations.⁹¹ Indeed, the *kul* system was designed to prevent the emergence of a nobility as well as dynasties of office holders which might develop a power base of their own and thus make them independent of the sultan. While sons often would follow in their fathers' footsteps—not only as *timar* holders but, from the second half of the sixteenth century onwards, increasingly also as *kuls*—they rarely inherited their fathers' ranks and offices directly.⁹²

From Busbecq's description the Ottoman Empire emerges as a veritable meritocratic utopia. In the context of that same audience he explains,

there was not in all that great assembly [at the sultan's court] a single man who owed his position to aught save his valour and merit. No distinction is attached to birth among the Turks; the deference to be paid to a man is measured by the position he holds in the public service. . . . In making his appointments the Sultan pays no regard to any pretensions on the score of wealth or rank, nor does he take into consideration recommendations or popularity; he considers each case on its own merits, and examines carefully into the character, ability, and disposition of the man whose promotion is in question. It is by merit that men rise in the service, a system which ensures that posts should only be assigned to the competent. . . . Among the Turks, therefore, honours, high posts, and judgements are the rewards of great ability and good service. If a man be dishonest, lazy, or careless, he remains at the bottom of the ladder, an object of contempt; for such qualities there are no honours in Turkey!⁹³

Busbecq's emphasis on the importance of individual competence and merit for an individual's career is certainly exaggerated, although the methods of recruitment, the legal status of most office holders as slaves of the sultan, and the seemingly absolute power of the sultan certainly produced a climate which was more conducive to advancement on the basis of skill than parentage. In theory at least, the sultan after all enjoyed complete freedom over appointments unbound by social conventions such as the privilege of birth.

Whether Busbecq meant as praise of the Ottoman way what self-evidently appears as such to us today is not entirely clear. To be sure, the Flemish diplomat

⁹⁰ Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, *The Life and Letters of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, Seigneur de Bousbecque, Knight, Imperial Ambassador*, ed. and tr. Charles Thornton Forster and Francis Henry Blackburne Daniell, 2 vols (London: Paul, 1881), i.154. See also Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, 31–2.

⁹¹ For exceptions, see, for example, Johann Strauss, 'Ottoman Rule Experienced and Remembered: Remarks on Some Local Greek Chronicles', in Adanir and Faroqi (eds), *The Ottomans and the Balkans*, 203.

⁹² Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, 33–9, esp. p. 38.

⁹³ Busbecq, *Life and Letters*, i.154.

favourably contrasted what he had observed at the sultan's court with conditions at home, pointing out that

This is the reason that they are successful in their undertakings, that they lord it over others, and are daily extending the bounds of their empire. These are not our ideas, with us there is no opening left for merit; birth is the standard for everything; the prestige of birth is the sole key to advancement in the public service.⁹⁴

Yet this contrast may be rhetorical, rather than genuine. In line with the levels of Christian-European discourse about 'the Turk' identified by Winfried Schulze, it is possible that the passage may have been intended—or was at least read—as a call to arms against the Ottomans to the nobility who would stand to lose their privileges, which were, after all, based on birth, should the Ottomans conquer their homelands.⁹⁵ Regardless of the rhetorical purpose, Busbecq's description echoes the meritocratic ideal to which the Ottoman elite itself in principle adhered. Translating this into practice, however, was often all but straightforward. The complications were at least partly related to the particular way in which Ottoman elite society was organized.

As noted before, the *kul* system was effectively a system of household slavery. The institution of the household, in fact, provided the basic organizing principle within the Ottoman elite, so much so that Metin Kunt has called households the very 'building blocks of the Ottoman political edifice'. Indeed, as we saw earlier, to all intents and purposes, the sixteenth-century Ottoman state was coterminous with the sultan's household which provided the central recruitment agency for the state's military-administrative positions. Even at the turn of the sixteenth century, this mixing of personal and political household was clearly visible in the training of the most promising *devşirme* recruits who received not only an education which prepared them for their future careers as military commanders and administrators but, as pages, also performed various domestic duties in the chambers, kitchens, and palace gardens. The later grand vizier Koca Sinan Paşa, for instance, served as Süleyman the Magnificent's chief taster before his graduation from the palace. Remarkably, the legal status of the sultan's personal retainers as *kuls* does not seem to have changed, even as, with the abolition (or at least permanent suspension) of the *devşirme* by the mid-seventeenth century, sons of *kuls* as well as free-born Muslims filled the ranks of the military-administrative elite. Apparently, the benefits of rank and office made slave status not merely acceptable but even desirable.⁹⁶

Without question, the sultan's household was the most exalted and politically important household in the Ottoman Empire. In spite of the fact that, by the turn of the seventeenth century, the process of transformation towards a more inclusive

⁹⁴ Busbecq, *Life and Letters*, i.155.

⁹⁵ Schulze, *Reich und Türkengefahr*, 58–60.

⁹⁶ Kunt, 'Households', 103, quotation from this page; Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, 45; Carter Vaughn Findley, 'Political Culture and the Great Households', in Suraiya N. Faroqi (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, iii: *The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603–1839* (Cambridge: CUP, 2006), 65–6; Murphey, *Ottoman Sovereignty*, 8–9, 87, 146–9; Necipoglu, *Architecture*, ch. 6; Miller, *Palace School*, 123–4; Franz Babinger and Géza Dávid, 'Sinān Paşa, *Khodja*: 2. The Vizier and Statesman (d. 1004/1596)', in *EP*, vol. ix (1997), p. 631.

political entity was already well underway, the Empire was still a patrimonial state in which the sultan, as head of the royal household, remained the ultimate source of power and honour. Nevertheless, the sultan's household was only the Empire's first, and not its only politically significant one.⁹⁷

Until the accession of Mehmed III in 1595, it had been customary to send imperial princes to the provinces where they would have a chance to acquire experience in the business of government. It was here, too, that they formed their own households of trusted advisers and supporters who, on their accession, would replace some of the former sultan's appointees. Given that the question of succession was frequently resolved by contest between the deceased monarch's sons, which usually took the form of civil war, it was crucial for every prince to establish a following of his own. The last such fratricidal conflict, however, took place between the later Sultan Selim II and his brother Bayezid, even during the lifetime of their father Süleyman the Magnificent. Selim II's successors, Murad III and his son Mehmed III, however, could take the throne unopposed since their brothers were all under age at the time of the sultans' deaths, in practice establishing succession by seniority. Because of the same 'series of demographic accidents', Mehmed III was the last sultan to have held a provincial governorship and formed an independent household of his own prior to enthronement.⁹⁸

When Ahmed I took the reins after his father's unexpected death, he was only 13 years old, while his next oldest brother was 9. Both, therefore, had been too young to take on governorships of their own, all the more so since sending a prince with a legitimate claim to the throne into Anatolia at the height of the so-called Celali rebellions, which had broken out in 1596, would have further destabilized the domestic political situation, had the prince and the rebels enlisted each other's support. Sending his sons to the provinces would therefore have meant potential political suicide for Mehmed III, who might have been challenged by his own offspring in the same manner as Selim I had deposed his father Bayezid II. The accession of Ahmed I also set the crucial precedent which ended the practice of fratricide that had accompanied previous successions to the Ottoman throne. On the one hand, Ahmed, who was still too young to have fathered any male heirs, needed his younger brothers to remain alive to ensure the survival of the dynasty in case he died before having a son; on the other, Ahmed's brothers themselves were far too young to pose any serious challenge to his rule. After Mehmed III's death, as

⁹⁷ Kunt, 'Households'; Findley, 'Political Culture', 66–7; Tezcan, *Second Ottoman Empire*, 94; Jane Hathaway, *The Politics of Household in Ottoman Egypt: The Rise of the Qazdağlıs* (Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization; Cambridge: CUP, 1997), 18–19; Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual*, 18–19. For a plea to pay greater attention to households and their interconnections in all strata of Ottoman society, see Palmira Brummett, 'Placing the Ottomans in the Mediterranean World: The Question of Notables and Households', *Osmanlı Araştırmaları/Journal of Ottoman Studies*, 36 (2010), 75–94.

⁹⁸ Günhan Börekçi, 'Factions and Favorites at the Courts of Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603–17) and His Immediate Predecessors', PhD dissertation, Ohio State University, Columbus, 2010, 85–9, quotation from p. 87; Kunt, 'Households', 110–11; Findley, 'Political Culture', 66; Murphey, *Ottoman Sovereignty*, chs 4 and 5; İnalcık, *Ottoman Empire*, 59–62.

Günhan Börekçi has pointed out, the House of Osman was more vulnerable to the threat of extinction than it had ever been.⁹⁹

Although organized around members of the dynasty, the households of governor-princes followed the general pattern by which the sultan's servants who were sent out from the palace to take up various positions in the Ottoman provincial and imperial administration formed their own households, often with a core of lower-ranking *kuls* with whom they had been associated while serving in the palace.¹⁰⁰ The Venetian-born eunuch Gazanfer, for instance, who rose to the politically crucial palace office of the *kapı ağası* and thus the chief of the white eunuchs under Mehmed III, had been assigned to Mehmed's grandfather, the later sultan Selim II, from among the palace slaves.¹⁰¹ While this may not have mattered much in the case of the princes' households, as a general rule, such retainers coming from the palace technically remained slaves of the sultan's, even while they maintained ties of patronage with their respective household heads.¹⁰²

Grandee households formed subsidiary loci of recruitment into Ottoman state service. While being appointed to state offices from service in a grandee household had been possible throughout Ottoman history, the importance of this avenue of incorporation intensified considerably from the mid-sixteenth century onwards. Normally, household members would begin their careers at lower levels of the provincial administration under the patronage of the household head, but in exceptional circumstances an entry higher up in the provincial hierarchy was possible. In the 1530s, for instance, the *kethüda* of Hüsrev Bey, the *sancakbeyi* (district governor) of Bosnia, was directly appointed *sancakbeyi* of Klis in recognition of his service on the border.¹⁰³

Relatively little is known about the individual origins of such grandee household recruits, except that they would have included volunteers from among the *re'aya*. It is only reasonable to expect that at least some of these appointees were the personal slaves of the grandee in question. As Jane Hathaway has remarked in the context of military households in eighteenth-century Egypt, recruitment to the household, not least by purchasing slaves, was a standard 'household activity'. While Metin

⁹⁹ Börekçi, 'Factions and Favorites', 81–3. On fratricide in the Ottoman Empire, see also A. D. Alderson, *The Structure of the Ottoman Dynasty* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), ch. 4; Michael Wink, Thomas Maissen, and Annette Kämmerer, 'Geschwistermord im Spannungsfeld zwischen Gewalt und Altruismus', in Kämmerer, Thomas Kuner, Maissen, and Wink (eds), *Gewalt und Altruismus: Interdisziplinäre Annäherungen an ein grundlegendes Thema des Humanen* (Schriften des Marsilius-Kollegs, 14; Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2015), 24–30.

¹⁰⁰ Kunt, 'Households', 111; Findley, 'Political Culture', 76.

¹⁰¹ Maria Pia Pedani, 'Veneziani a Costantinopoli alla fine del XVI secolo', in F. Lucchetta (ed.), 'Veneziani a Costantinopoli, musulmani a Venezia', *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* 15, supplement (1997), 68; Pedani, 'Safiye's Household and Venetian Diplomacy', *Turcica*, 32 (2000), 14; Eric R. Dursteler, 'Fatima Hatun née Beatrice Michiel: Renegade Women in the Early Modern Mediterranean', *Medieval History Journal*, 12 (2009), 356; Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 1.

¹⁰² Kunt, 'Households', 111; Findley, 'Political Culture', 75.

¹⁰³ Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, 38–40, 65; Kunt, 'Households', 110; Findley, 'Political Culture', 76; Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual*, 83; Rifa'at 'Ali Abou-El-Haj, *Formation of the Modern State: The Ottoman Empire, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries* (SUNY Series in the Social and Economic History of the Middle East; Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1991), 57.

Kunt's research has suggested that the phenomenon of slaves recruiting slaves emerged in the seventeenth century, the careers of such renegades as Uluç Hasan Paşa examined in Chapter 4 show that the phenomenon had sixteenth-century precursors.¹⁰⁴

These recruitment patterns underline the importance of household membership which bestowed a political identity on individuals and embedded them in the complex webs of patronage and clientage (*intisab* in Turkish) which became increasingly important in trying to secure appointments for oneself. As a phenomenon, the importance of household membership was by no means restricted to the sultan's household, but encompassed the entire *‘askeri* class, whether high-ranking *kapıkulus*, provincial grandees, or *ulema*.¹⁰⁵ In the process, not only did household heads themselves acquire additional prestige and political power but those who enjoyed their trust emerged as highly influential power brokers.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, the resource pool from which followers were rewarded was the pool of appointments and revenue grants available to the Ottoman state.¹⁰⁷

Potentially, therefore, the ties and rivalries inherent in a polity based on overlapping households ran counter to the ideal of appointments on the basis of merit. The power of a patron to promote his clients to important offices at the very least biased a system of promotion which was organized around demonstrations of skill as well as precedence of seniority, understood as a marker of experience. On the other hand, promotion on the basis of patronage does, of course, neither automatically preclude the possibility nor reduce the likelihood that an appointee was suitable for the post he was given. The growth in political importance of elite households by the second half of the sixteenth century, which was to continue unabated throughout the seventeenth, was part and parcel of the wider political and social transformations which were taking place at the same time.

TRANSFORMATIONS

The sixteenth century marked a high point as far as the political importance of converts in the Ottoman Empire is concerned. Although individuals who had embraced Islam, rather than having been born into it, continued to occupy

¹⁰⁴ Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, 38; Hathaway, *Politics of Household*, 123–4, 168, quotation from p. 123; İnalcık, *Ottoman Empire*, 87–8; Metin İ. Kunt, 'Kulların Kulları', *Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Dergisi, Hümaniter Bilimler*, 3 (1975), 27–42; Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition*, 25.

¹⁰⁵ Hathaway, *Politics of Household*; Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, 34–40; Kunt, 'Households', 111–12; Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual*, 19–20; Zilfi, *Politics of Piety*, 53–8, 92–101; Klein, *Die osmanischen Ulema*, 105–30; Sievert, *Zwischen arabischer Provinz und Hoher Pforte*, 27–8, 323–4, 338–44, 463.

¹⁰⁶ Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 322–3; Börekçi, 'Factions and Favorites', 17, 152; Peirce, *Imperial Harem*, 10–12; Suraiya N. Faroqhi, 'Die Vorlagen (*telhise*) des Großwesirs Sinân Paşa an Sultan Murâd III.', PhD dissertation, University of Hamburg, 1967, 152.

¹⁰⁷ Abou-El-Haj, *Formation of the Modern State*, 55–7; Kunt, 'Households', 110; Findley, 'Political Culture', 76.

significant positions within state service until the very end of the Empire, their numbers steadily declined.

The beginning of this relative decline in the importance of converts in the Ottoman elite coincided with the Empire's consolidation. By the time of Süleyman's death, the Well-Protected Domains stretched from Buda to the Gulf of Aden, from Algiers to Basra. Territorial expansion continued, although at a much slower pace, until the final decades of the seventeenth century. Between 1568 and 1593, the Western borders remained largely stable. Even the Long War with the Habsburgs (1593–1606) saw no significant territorial gains for the Ottomans. Nevertheless, the sheer extent of the realm created administrative challenges which made personal government by the sultan virtually impossible. Although the monarch retained his power in theory, in practice it devolved onto the viziers, first among them the grand vizier, the governors of provinces and districts, and an expanding and increasingly professionalized bureaucracy.¹⁰⁸

Symptomatic of the wide-ranging socio-political changes in this context is the accession of Selim II in 1566 which seems to have resulted in the admission to the ranks of the sultan's *kuls* of an unprecedented number of born Muslims, most of them clients who had served him since the drawn-out conflict with his brother Bayezid.¹⁰⁹ At around the same time, the janissaries obtained blanket permission to marry. Previously, as slaves of the sultan, they had been able to do so only if the sultan had granted their individual requests. Since it was feared that family life would interfere with the janissaries' training, discipline, and mobility, however, marriages had, in general, been discouraged.¹¹⁰ In addition, the corps began to admit the sons of *kuls*, thus allowing sons of janissaries to follow their fathers' careers in a way which resembled the practice of inheritance among the *timar*-holding cavalry. Although once the Empire's military-administrative backbone, the latter became increasingly obsolete as the Ottoman state sought to meet its fiscal and military needs in ways which better suited the challenges posed by late sixteenth-century developments in warfare and economic change.¹¹¹ To be sure, that sons of *kuls* joined the sultan's service was not new in itself since this had been common practice at least among the *ümera*, i.e. the higher-ranking members of the elite.¹¹² Yet this form of admission and recruitment now began to take place on a massive scale. Moreover, it also became possible again for Muslim *re'aya* to enter the '*askeri*' class. Indeed, as Baki Tezcan has demonstrated, as early as the late sixteenth

¹⁰⁸ Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 154–76, 319, 321–4; Murphey, *Ottoman Sovereignty*, ch. 9; Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual*, ch. 8; Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, 35.

¹⁰⁹ Murphey, *Ottoman Sovereignty*, 120, 123–5; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 59–60.

¹¹⁰ Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 140–1; Goodwin, *Janissaries*, 34.

¹¹¹ İnalcık, *Ottoman Empire*, 48–9; Sugar, *Southeastern Europe*, 196; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 141, 210–15; Linda T. Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560–1660* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 6; Leiden: Brill 1996); Darling, 'Public Finances: The Role of the Ottoman Centre', in Faroqhi (ed.), *Cambridge History of Turkey*, vol. iii, ch. 6; Oktay Özel, 'The Reign of Violence: The *celalis*, c. 1550–1700', in Woodhead (ed.), *Ottoman World*, 185–6; Tezcan, *Second Ottoman Empire*, pp. 8–13 and 185 as well as chs 2 and 6.

¹¹² Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, 33–9; Tezcan, *Second Ottoman Empire*, 185.

century, the majority of new recruits for the sultan's standing infantry and cavalry regiments were of Muslim *re'aya* background.¹¹³

While these measures must have seemed desirable in order to meet the state's need for military manpower during the almost continuous wars between 1578 and 1618, they soon developed a dynamic of their own as imperial expansion began to slow and opportunities for reward stabilized, increasing the competition for office, power, prestige, and wealth among those considered eligible. In this context, further swelling the ranks of the *'askeri* by actively recruiting through the *devşirme* became both impractical and undesirable. Consequently, the Ottoman elite gradually became more religiously exclusive in its recruitment than it had hitherto been.¹¹⁴ With the exception of a shortage of eligible candidates—which the Ottoman Empire did not experience at the time—there was no structural reason to reopen the elite to non-Muslims.

Taken together, these social transformations effected a curtailment of sultanic power. No longer outsiders by virtue of their ethnic, regional, and religious origins as well as legal status, many of the nominal *kuls* became increasingly independent of the sultan—all the more so since, now married to local women and participating in the local economy as artisans and traders, they did not remain aloof from local communities. Although the monarch remained powerful, that power was not absolute anymore. The execution of Osman II at the hand of a coalition of the janissaries and the *ulema* in 1622 is only the most striking manifestation of this change in the Ottoman political system.¹¹⁵

Older historiography has tended to view these changes as signs of the Ottoman Empire's decline from greatness which are said to have led inevitably to its demise in the early twentieth century. It is still popular to regard Süleyman's successors as largely incompetent and politically weak rulers who comfortably locked themselves away in their palaces to give free reign to the various factions and the women and eunuchs of their harems—so much so, in fact, that, following Ahmed Refik, the period from the turn of the seventeenth to the turn of the eighteenth century has been dismissively referred to as the 'sultanate of women'.¹¹⁶

This view, however, as Abou-El-Haj has pointed out more than twenty years ago, unfairly judges this polity against a yardstick of stasis which is both unrealistic and uncritically accepting of the opinions of a handful of Ottoman commentators,

¹¹³ Tezcan, *Second Ottoman Empire*, 179, 204–5; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 141.

¹¹⁴ İnalcık, *Ottoman Empire*, 116; Zilfi, *Politics of Piety*, 94; Darling, *Revenue-Raising*, 8; Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 169–70. Metin Kunt has pointed out that a similar development had led to the exclusion of *re'aya* volunteers in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. See his *Sultan's Servants*, 35–8.

¹¹⁵ Tezcan, *Second Ottoman Empire*; Tezcan, 'Searching for Osman: A Reassessment of the Deposition of the Ottoman Sultan Osman II (1618–1622)', PhD dissertation, Princeton University, 2001, esp. ch. 5; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 78, 258, 322.

¹¹⁶ Ahmed (Altınay) Refik, *Kadınlar Saltanatı* (Istanbul, 1332 AH/1913–14); İnalcık, *Ottoman Empire*, ch. 6; Sugar, *Southeastern Europe*, 187–95; Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire*, 75–7. For a much more nuanced appraisal of this period and the role of women in Ottoman politics and patronage of the arts and architecture, see Peirce, *Imperial Harem*.

like Mustafa Ali and Koçu Bey, who had their own axes to grind.¹¹⁷ Leslie Peirce has brilliantly shown that the growth in the political influence of women and eunuchs in this period was a consequence of the sultans' becoming sedentary which, in turn, was a consequence of the Empire's size and the slowing down of imperial expansion.¹¹⁸ The alleged political instability associated with the rapid turnover of grand viziers after Sokollu Mehmed Paşa's assassination, moreover, needs to be seen not as a result of the sultans' political weakness, but rather as an attempt to exercise their political power and assert themselves, as Günhan Börekçi has recently argued.¹¹⁹ Finally, Baki Tezcan has proposed a promising way out of the dilemma of the decline paradigm by seeing the process of transformation which the Empire underwent from the late sixteenth century onwards on its own terms as simply that, a period of change which gave birth to a modified imperial polity, a second Ottoman Empire in much the same way as American Independence is not viewed as heralding the end of the British Empire, but merely a change in its composition.¹²⁰

During the period under discussion in this book, however, these developments were only just beginning to make themselves felt and their eventual outcome was by no means a foregone conclusion. Those Christian-European renegades whom we encounter in the following chapters all entered and functioned within what, to a significant extent, was an Ottoman elite made up of converts to Islam.

¹¹⁷ Abou-El-Haj, *Formation of the Modern State*, esp. 22–3; Darling, *Revenue-Raising*, 5.

¹¹⁸ Peirce, *Imperial Harem*, esp. ch. 6.

¹¹⁹ Börekçi, 'Factions and Favorites'.

¹²⁰ Tezcan, *Second Ottoman Empire*.

2

‘Turning Turk’, Becoming an Ottoman Muslim

When the Holy Roman Emperors’ ambassadors left Vienna to take up their posts in the Ottoman capital, they were usually accompanied by a significant retinue which consisted not only of their official and personal households but often included a number of travellers. One such traveller was the Bohemian nobleman Václav Vratislav of Mitrovic ‘who was entrusted . . . to the care of *Frederick Kregwitz* [Friedrich von Kreckwitz], who was sent to Constantinople with rich presents, in the year 1591’.¹ Mitrovic later committed his memories of his sojourn in the Ottoman Empire to paper, producing one of the notable works of Bohemian humanist writing. Among the men travelling with Ambassador Kreckwitz was a certain Niccolo de Bello, ‘an Italian . . . a native of the Island of Crete’. When the diplomat and his entourage stopped in Buda (German: Ofen), the capital of Ottoman Hungary, Bello, in the words of Mitrovic and the embassy’s apothecary Friedrich Seidel, ‘turned Turk’.²

To become Turk and *to turn Turk* (German: *Türke werden/zum Türken werden*, Italian: *farsi Turco*, French: *se faire Turc*, Czech: *poturčiti se*) are the phrases most frequently used by early modern Christian Europeans when talking about the conversion of a fellow Christian or Jew to Islam.³ From a modern vantage point the term is curious since, rather than focusing on the converts’ religious change, it suggests a change in ethnicity or ‘nationality’. It is, however, illustrative of the lived realities of early modern Europeans. For them, Muslims were Turks because the Muslims which the inhabitants of Christendom encountered most frequently,

¹ Václav Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures of Baron Wenceslas Wratislaw of Mitrowitz*, tr. A. H. Wratislaw (London: Bell and Daldy, 1862), 1.

² Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures*, 10; Friedrich Seidel, *Denckwürdige Gesandtschafft an die Ottomannische Pforte, Welche ehbmahls auf Röm. Kays. Maj. Rudolphi II. Hohen Befehl Herr Fridrich von Kregwitz . . . verrichtet* (Görlitz, 1711), 2.

³ See also Nabil I. Matar, ‘“Turning Turk”: Conversion to Islam in English Renaissance Thought’, *Durham University Journal*, 86 (1994), 33–41; Daniel J. Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570–1630* (Early Modern Cultural Studies; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 36, 107; Laura Lisy-Wagner, *Islam, Christianity and the Making of Czech Identity, 1453–1683* (Transculturalisms, 1400–1700; Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 73; Virginia Aksan, ‘Who Was an Ottoman? Reflections on “Wearing Hats” and “Turning Turk”’, in Barbara Schmidt-Haberkamp (ed.), *Europa und die Türkei im 18. Jahrhundert/Europe and Turkey in the 18th Century* (Göttingen: Bonn University Press and V&R Unipress, 2011), 305–18; Warner G. Rice, ‘To Turn Turk’, *Modern Language Notes*, 46/3 (Mar. 1931), 153–4. In early modern English, the phrase *to turn Turk* also had a sexual meaning which was absent from its continental equivalents.

either in real life—in ports, at sea, on the battlefield, or in the slave prisons—or their imagination—spurred by sermons, plays, broadsheets, and travellers' accounts—were the Muslim subjects of the Ottoman sultan.⁴ But, of course, the Ottoman Empire was not a Turkish empire. Far from it. And even though it was an Islamic state in the classical sense, unlike their Christian counterparts, Islamic states by and large did not impose uniformity of belief on the inhabitants of the territories they ruled over. To us, therefore, the metaphor employed by Christian Europeans appears not merely inaccurate but highly distortive.

On the other hand, these inaccuracies and distortions notwithstanding, the phrase rather aptly captures the extent of the transformation which converts to Islam in the Ottoman Empire underwent in the process of social conversion.⁵ Discussing the examples of Niccolo de Bello and others, this chapter will explore how early modern European Christians and, though more rarely, Jews found themselves in situations in which it became possible and attractive for them to embrace Islam and what such conversions entailed. For, when 'turning Turk', what was at stake were not only questions of salvation and the afterlife but also far more mundane matters such as clothing habits.⁶

CONVERSION, RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL

Whereas Seidel merely notes Bello's conversion in passing, Mitrovic provides a detailed description of the ceremonies surrounding it. One day, as Mitrovic and other members of Kreckwitz's entourage returned to their boats on the Danube from a visit to Buda's sights, they

saw the Italian renegade, who had turned Turk, being conducted with a grand procession by the Turks into town, in the following manner. First went about 300 Turkish soldiers, or azais, with long muskets, who shouted for joy, and some of whom fired; after these rode some horse-soldiers, apparently their commanders; next, five banner-bearers with red banners; after these went some disagreeable gipsy music, consisting of shawms, fiddles, and lutes; next rode the unhappy [i.e. ill-fated] Italian renegade, on a handsomely caparisoned horse, on each side of whom rode a Turk of rank, and he in the midst, wearing a scarlet pelisse lined with foxskins, and a Turkish

⁴ Compare Felix Konrad, 'From the "Turkish Menace" to Exoticism and Orientalism: Islam as Antithesis of Europe (1453–1914)?', *European History Online* (Mainz: Leibniz Institute of European History, 14 Mar. 2011), par. 7, <<http://www.ieg-ego.eu/konradf-2010-en>>, accessed 18 Feb. 2016.

⁵ Richard Bulliet, *Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period: An Essay in Quantitative History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), ch. 4, esp. pp. 33–7; Felix Konrad, 'Soziale Mobilität europäischer Renegaten im frühneuzeitlichen Osmanischen Reich', in Henning, P. Jürgens and Thomas Weller (eds), *Religion und Mobilität: Zum Verhältnis von raumbezogener Mobilität und religiöser Identitätsbildung im frühneuzeitlichen Europa* (Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte, Mainz, Beiheft 81; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2010), 228–33; Henning Sievert, *Zwischen arabischer Provinz und Hoher Pforte: Beziehungen, Bildung und Politik des osmanischen Bürokraten Râğıb Mehmed Paşa (st. 1763)* (Kultur, Recht und Politik in muslimischen Gesellschaften, 11; Würzburg: Ergon, 2008), 50–1, 460–1; Claire Norton, 'Conversion to Islam in the Ottoman Empire', *Wiener Zeitschrift zur Geschichte der Neuzeit*, 7 (2007), 31–3, 38–9.

⁶ Lisy-Wagner, *Czech Identity*, 73 makes a similar observation but does not pursue it any further.

cap with several cranes' feathers in it. In his hand he held an arrow, and had one finger directed upwards, thereby making profession of the Turkish religion. After him rode several trumpeters, blowing their trumpets without intermission, who were followed by about 300 Turkish hussars, ornamentally dressed in pelisses of spotted lynxskin, who sometimes shouted, sometimes sprang from their horses, and exhibited tokens of great exultation. When they rode in at the gate, they halted in the gateway, and all thrice made profession of their faith with great clamour, saying, 'Allaha, illasa, Muhamet resulach!' i.e. 'One true God, save him no other God, and Mahomet his chief prophet!' They also fired thrice. They then rode in the same order past our boats, shouting all the time, no doubt in despite of us.⁷

The procession staged in celebration of Bello's change of faith was an impressive spectacle which must have drawn a considerable crowd with its music, the shouting, and, of course, the musket salutes. The occasion certainly was a joyous one, except of course for the Imperial ambassador and his companions who had to come to terms with the fact that a Christian from within their midst had turned to Islam. This sense of loss and Mitrovic's consequent condemnation of the renegade's decision notwithstanding, his account of events taking place during his stay in Buda is immensely valuable because the significance of the elements it enumerates is corroborated by other sources.

The central act through which a *gâvur* or infidel achieved formal conversion to Islam was, then as now, the proclamation of the so-called *shahâda* (Turkish *şahadet*). The words 'I testify that there is no god but God and I testify that Muhammad is the messenger of God' (Arabic: 'Ashhadu an lâ ilâha illâ llâh wa-ashhadu anna Muḥammadan rasûlu llâh') are regarded as the Islamic confession of faith and, although garbled, the Arabic formula is clearly recognizable in Mitrovic's description of the procession celebrating Bello's change of faith.⁸ While the importance of the public performance of uttering the *shahâda* is generally emphasized in Islamic theology and jurisprudence, especially by Hanafite jurists, deeds are often regarded as no less important than belief. Consequently, an individual's behaviour such as performing the obligatory prayers, attending the Friday sermon, and abstaining from pork, as well as dress acquired a special role as markers of religious affiliation, even in a legal context.⁹

Dress, in particular, plays a central role in the story about Bello's conversion told by Mitrovic. This is clearly evident from the attention which the Bohemian paid to recalling the fine fur-trimmed coat and the feather-adorned turban which the

⁷ Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures*, 17–18. Compare Seidel, *Denckwürdige Gesandtschafft*, 2; Ralf C. Müller, *Prosopographie der Reisenden und Migranten ins Osmanische Reich (1396–1611)*, 10 vols (Leipzig: Eudora, 2006), i.264–5.

⁸ Andrew Rippin, 'Witness to Faith', in Jane Dammen McAuliffe (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, 6 vols (Leiden: Brill, 2001–6), v.488; Bulliet, *Conversion*, 33; Norton, 'Conversion', 26; Yohanan Friedmann, *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam: Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition* (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), 121; Lucia Rostagno, *Mi faccio turco: Esperienze ed immagini dell'islam nell'Italia moderna (Oriente Moderno, supplement no. 1; Studi e materiali sulla conoscenza dell'oriente in Italia, 4; Rome: Istituto per l'orienta C. A. Nallino, 1983)*, 61–3.

⁹ Matthias Radscheit, 'Witnessing and Testifying', in McAuliffe (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, v.498–9; Jane I. Smith, 'Faith', in McAuliffe (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, ii.162–72; Rippin, 'Witness to Faith', 491.

Italian convert sported during the procession. More than that, however, dress was crucial in the events which led to Bello's conversion in the first place, roughly one month before the procession took place.

According to Mitrovic, while Kreckwitz and most of those who were travelling with them had attended an audience with the *beylerbeyi*, the governor-general, on 10 September 1591, Bello had gone

to the janissaries, who had been assigned us as a guard, whose tents were pitched on a hill near the Danube. There he drank and made acquaintance with them, and gave them to understand that he wanted to become a Turk, by taking his hat from his head, treading it under foot, cutting it to pieces, and finally throwing it into the Danube; he also tore his collar to pieces. As soon as he had done this the janissaries brought him a turban or round Turkish cap, placed it upon his head, and conducted him into town.¹⁰

This was the defining moment of Bello's conversion, evidently of much greater significance than the verbal profession of faith publicly delivered in the company of notables and soldiers at the gate of Buda. Discarding and mutilating his 'Christian' hat as well as his collar appears to have been enough to convince Bello's drinking companions that he wished to abandon his Christian faith. All it took to complete the transition from Christian to Muslim, it seems, was placing a turban on his head.¹¹

In its essence, the events described by Mitrovic constituted a ritual of investiture which frequently marked acts and rites of initiation such as marriage, coronation, and baptism.¹² In fact, when the conversion of a Muslim to Christianity was staged in Vienna in 1629, the undressing and clothing of the convert was a crucial element in communicating the man's conversion to the audience in front of St Stephen's Cathedral. Parallel to Bello's story, discarding his headgear—in this case a turban—and throwing it to the ground visually communicated the neophyte's wish to be baptized, although in this case it was preceded by a verbal affirmation in several languages, including Turkish, Arabic, and Slovenian. In eighteenth-century England, Ishmael Bashaw likewise had to be recast as 'an Englishman and a Christian' by having his whiskers trimmed and exchanging his 'Turkish dress' for an English suit before the bishop of Lincoln would approve him for baptism, although in this case the outward transformation predated the actual baptism by several days. At the same time, however, Bashaw had embraced Christianity long before and his requests to be baptized had, in fact, been repeatedly denied.¹³

¹⁰ Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures*, 10–11.

¹¹ Bello's conversion is also briefly discussed in Lisy-Wagner, *Czech Identity*, 53 where the author likewise notes the symbolic importance of dress in this context from a Christian-European perspective.

¹² Peter von Moos, 'Das mittelalterliche Kleid als Identitätssymbol und Identifikationsmittel', in Moos (ed.), *Unverwechselbarkeit: Persönliche Identität und Identifikation in der vormodernen Gesellschaft* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2004), 135. See also the contributions in Stewart Gordon (ed.), *Robes and Honor: The Medieval World of Investiture* (The New Middle Ages; Houndsmill: Palgrave, 2001), esp. ch. 1.

¹³ Manja Quakatz, '"Conversio Turci": Muslimische Kriegsgefangene im Heiligen Römischen Reich Deutscher Nation (17./18. Jahrhundert)', PhD dissertation, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität, Münster, 2015, 221–64, esp. 228–30 for the example of an Ottoman subject's baptism in Vienna mentioned here; Ishmael Bashaw, *The Turkish Refugee* (London, 1797), 29–30; Nabil I. Matar, *Turks, Moors and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 173–5.

Perhaps Mitrovic's description of Bello's conversion in Buda, then, tells us less about the occasion itself than about Mitrovic's need to conceptualize it in the proper format for his audience. In this context, the Cretan's destruction of his hat and collar drive home the intentionality of his renouncement of Christianity, emphasizing his turning away from the *res publica Christiana*, just as discarding the turban signified the abandonment of Islam in the case of the 'Turk' who accepted Christianity in Vienna. Yet the symbolic centrality of clothes in conversion to Islam—to the extent that, in Renaissance England, the expression 'donning the turban' became a synonym for it—is more than a literary trope, let alone one which spoke solely to Christian-European sensibilities.¹⁴

Indeed, the imagery itself, and its power as a symbol, derive from the fact that Christian writers and playwrights shared an understanding of the symbolic meaning attached to clothing with their Muslim contemporaries. Yet what distinguished Ottoman Muslims from *zimmis* (Arabic: *dhimmi*), the sultan's non-Muslim subjects, was not so much the style as the colour of the headgear, with white reserved for Muslims. In this sense, then, the turban was first and foremost a symbol of Ottomanization in its widest sense. Nevertheless, even Ottoman Muslims regarded white turbans 'as the pre-eminent Muslim symbol' and headdress more generally as a quick-and-easy marker of distinction, especially between Ottoman Muslims and Christian Europeans. This visual distinction is captured by Ottoman miniatures such as the painting of the procession of the makers of bath towels from the *Surname-i hümayun*, a manuscript commemorating the circumcision of the future sultan Mehmed III. In the detail given in Figure 2.1, the European diplomats attending the festivities are readily distinguishable by their dark hats which form a striking contrast to the white turbans worn by the Ottoman-Muslim men surrounding them.¹⁵

The importance of clothing in the construction of individual as well as group identities has received considerable scholarly attention in recent years.¹⁶ In the early modern period, moreover, dress codes and sumptuary laws frequently regulated

¹⁴ On the link between conversion to Islam and change of dress in contemporary English literature, see Nabil I. Matar, 'Introduction', in Daniel J. Vitkus (ed.), *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption: Barbary Captivity Narratives from Early Modern England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 36; Matar, *Europe through Arab Eyes, 1578–1727* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 67; Matar, 'The Renegade in English Seventeenth-Century Imagination', *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900*, 33 (1993), 501; Daniel J. Vitkus (ed.), *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England: Selimus, A Christian Turned Turk, and The Renegado* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 4; Robert C. Davis, *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters: White Slavery in the Mediterranean, the Barbary Coast, and Italy, 1500–1800* (pbk edn, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 105.

¹⁵ Matthew Elliot, 'Dress Codes in the Ottoman Empire: The Case of the Franks', in Suraiya N. Faruqi and Christoph K. Neumann (eds), *Ottoman Costumes: From Textile to Identity* (Istanbul: Eren, 2004), 105, 117–19, quotation from p. 117; Marc David Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam: Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 198–9; Tijana Krstić, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Stanford, CA: SUP, 2011), 129; W. Björkman, 'Tulband', in *EP*, vol. x (2000), pp. 608–15; Bartolomé and Lucile Bennassar, *Les Chrétiens d'Allah: L'Histoire extraordinaire des renégats, XVI^e et XVII^e siècles* (Paris: Perrin, 1989), 325–32.

¹⁶ Ulrika Rublack, *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford: OUP, 2010); Susan Crane, *The Performance of Self: Ritual, Clothing, and Identity during the Hundred Years War* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002); Moos (ed.), *Unverwechselbarkeit*, esp. 135.

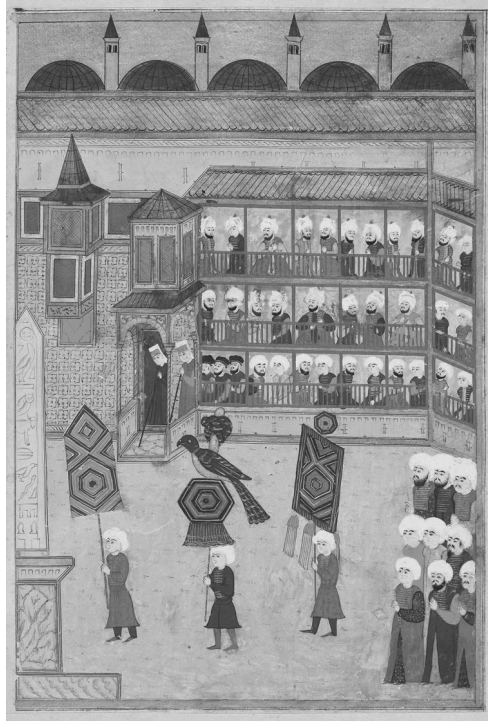


Figure 2.1. Detail from an Ottoman miniature depicting a scene from the festivities on the occasion of the circumcision of the later sultan Mehmed III. The Christian-European diplomats in the bottom left box of the stand in the background are clearly distinguishable from the Ottoman Muslims surrounding them by their dress, particularly their dark hats which form a stark contrast to the Muslims' white turbans. İntizami, *Surname-i hümayun* (Istanbul, 1583–8), Topkapı Palace Museum Library, Istanbul, Hazine 1344, fo. 339^a (photo: Topkapı Palace Museum, Istanbul).

who could wear what in often surprising detail.¹⁷ The Ottoman Empire was no exception. Here the observance of appropriate dress was regarded as a matter of justice which was understood above all as an issue of proper social relations. Consequently, dress codes prescribed styles, colours, and textiles not only according to social status and profession but also religious affiliation.¹⁸

¹⁷ Anne-Kathrin Reich, *Kleidung als Spiegelbild sozialer Differenzierung: Städtische Kleiderordnungen vom 14. bis zum 17. Jahrhundert am Beispiel der Altstadt Hannover* (Quellen und Darstellungen zur Geschichte Niedersachsens, 125; Hanover: Hahn, 2005); Alan Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions: A History of Sumptuary Law* (Houndsmill: Macmillan, 1996); Veronika Baur, *Kleiderordnungen in Bayern vom 14. bis zum 19. Jahrhundert* (Miscellanea Bavarica Monacensia, 32; Neue Schriftenreihe des Stadtarchivs München, 82; Munich: Woelfle, 1975); Lieselotte C. Eisenbart, *Kleiderordnungen der deutschen Städte zwischen 1350 und 1700: Ein Beitrag zur Kulturgeschichte des deutschen Bürgertums* (Göttinger Bausteine zur Geschichtswissenschaft, 32; Göttingen: Musterschmidt, 1962).

¹⁸ Betül İpşirli Argıt, 'Clothing Habits, Regulations and Non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire', *Akademik Araştırmalar Dergisi/Journal of Academic Studies*, 6/24 (2005), 9–96; Madeline C. Zilfi,

Dress was not merely descriptive, though: 'if a person of one group puts on a dress associated with another group', so one tradition attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, 'he thus deviates from the accepted order and he will be regarded as a member of that other group.'¹⁹ This hadith is reflected in Ottoman law. In addition to the body of law defined by the shari'a and the sultans' edicts (*kanun* in Turkish, *qānūn* in Arabic), eminent legal scholars or muftis were frequently requested to supply *fatwas* (Arabic: *fatwā*, pl. *fatāwā*), legal opinions, on specific legal issues. In the Empire, the most important of these jurists was the *şeyhülislam* or mufti of Istanbul. Although *fatwas* were not legally binding, they nevertheless influenced both legal practice and the making of *kanun*. In fact, at least the legal opinions issued by the *şeyhülislams*, which were usually collected by their students and successors and circulated in manuscript, frequently seem to have formed a body of case law.²⁰ As the following *fatwa* by Ebussuud Efendi, the famous scholar who served as *şeyhülislam* during the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent, makes clear, changing one's dress had precise legal consequences:

Question: What happens if a Muslim consciously wears the headdress of an unbeliever?

Answer: He is required to renew his faith as well as his marriage.²¹

In other words, by choosing to wear the headgear reserved for non-Muslims by the Empire's dress codes—even if it is worn only once and for a brief time—the Muslim in question was regarded to have committed apostasy from Islam. Since this *fatwa* is so obviously directed at deviant men, in the last consequence, failure to renew his faith would have resulted in the transgressor's execution.²² Incidentally, apostasy terminated marriage and all other contractual relationships, resulting in the apostate's civil death until reconversion to Islam.²³ Ebussuud's opinions

'Whose Laws? Gendering the Ottoman Sumptuary Regime', in Faroqhi and Neumann (eds), *Ottoman Costumes*, esp. 133–7; Elliot, 'Dress Codes'; Leslie P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (Studies in Middle Eastern History; New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 273.

¹⁹ As cited in Argit, 'Clothing Habits', 81.

²⁰ Bruce Masters, 'Fatwa (Fatva)', in *EOE*, 217; İlhami Yurdakul, 'Şeyhülislam (Shaykhulislam)', in *EOE*, 524–5; E. Tyan and J. R. Walsh, 'Fatwā', in *EP*, vol. ii (1965), pp. 866–7; Joshua Michael White, 'Catch and Release: Piracy, Slavery, and Law in the Early Modern Ottoman Mediterranean', PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 2012, 195–201, 264; Muhammad Khalid Masud, Brinkley Messick, and David S. Powers, 'Muftis, Fatwas, and Islamic Legal Interpretation', in Masud, Messick, and Powers (eds), *Islamic Legal Interpretation: Muftis and Their Fatwas* (Harvard Studies in Islamic Law; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 3–4; Colin Imber, *Ebu's-Su'ud: The Islamic Legal Tradition* (Jurists: Profiles in Legal Theory; Stanford, CA: SUP, 1997), 51–8.

²¹ Quoted in Argit, 'Clothing Habits', 90.

²² Joseph Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (2nd edn, Oxford: OUP, 1966), 187; Friedmann, *Tolerance and Coercion*, ch. 5, esp. pp. 123–4, 170–2.

²³ Schacht, *Islamic Law*, 132, 165; Friedmann, *Tolerance and Coercion*, ch. 5, esp. pp. 170–2 for the consequences of apostasy from Islam in this context. For the theological background, see Nabil al-Tikriti, 'Kalam in the Service of the State: Apostasy and the Defining of Ottoman Islamic Identity', in Hakan T. Karateke and Maurus Reinkowski (eds), *Legitimizing the Order: The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 34; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 131–49. On civil death, see Gauri Viswanathan, 'Coping with (Civil) Death: The Christian Convert's Rights of Passage in Colonial India', in Gyan Prakash (ed.), *After Colonialism: Imperial Histories and Postcolonial*

remained influential even long after his death, partly because he is widely credited with having played a key role in the reorganization of the Ottoman legal system undertaken in the reign of Süleyman who, in Turkish, is also known as 'the Lawgiver' (*Kanuni*). Nevertheless, it is unclear whether this particular legal opinion was issued in response to a specific query, meant as a general warning, or a purely academic exercise.²⁴

In the case of non-Muslims wearing Muslim dress, however, *fetvas* corresponded to existing practices. Once more Ebussuud:

Question: If a *dhimmi* dresses like a Muslim and when he is asked if he is Muslim or not and if he declares himself as Muslim what happens to him?

Answer: He is considered as a Muslim.²⁵

The idea of an association between a change of dress and religious conversion was one which exercised a powerful hold on Ottoman legal and religious practices. And it was quite naturally extended from *zimmis* to other non-Muslims. *Fetvas* published in the reign of Mehmed IV attest to the continued importance of this association until at least the late seventeenth century. Moreover, the reign of this sultan witnessed the compilation of the 'Statute of the New Muslim' which codified the procedure for male conversion to Islam. This law likewise emphasized the giving of gifts of clothes. Abdi Paşa, who compiled the text, collated existing practices, rather than instituting new procedures. Hence Marc Baer's conclusion that 'the process of conversion was . . . in part garment-centered' applies not merely to Mehmed IV's reign but also to those of his sixteenth- and seventeenth-century predecessors.²⁶ Bearing in mind the restrictions governing the clothing of Jews in Europe, for example, as well as the activities of Christian missionaries in Africa, Asia, and the New World during the early modern period, it is likely that most Christian Europeans would have had little difficulty in agreeing with Baer's analysis.²⁷ It is noteworthy that Nabil Matar, when discussing the baptism of Ishmael Bashaw and the importance of changing his outward appearance, notes

Displacements (Princeton, NJ: PUP, 1995), ch. 7; Eyal Ginio, 'Childhood, Mental Capacity and Conversion to Islam in the Ottoman State', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 25 (2001), 94–5.

²⁴ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300–1650: The Structure of Power* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 221.

²⁵ Quoted in Argit, 'Clothing Habits', 90. See also the discussion in Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 150–1.

²⁶ Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam*, 191–3, quotation from p. 198.

²⁷ On dress regulations pertaining to Jews, see Mark R. Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: PUP, 1994), 38–41; Maria R. Boes, 'Unwanted Travellers: The Tightening of City Borders in Early Modern Germany', in Thomas Betteridge (ed.), *Borders and Travellers in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 94–5; Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard Wiegers, *A Man of Three Worlds: Samuel Pallache, a Moroccan Jew in Catholic and Protestant Europe*, tr. Martin Beagles (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 40. John Rutherford's account of his captivity among the Chippewas in the mid-eighteenth century suggests that dress, along with hairstyle, was also of symbolic importance in the context of the admission of foreigners to Native American societies. See Linda Colley, *Captives: Britain, Empire and the World, 1600–1850* (London: Cape, 2002), 193–4.

the parallels between the cultural transformation imposed on Bashaw and that demanded of Native American converts to Christianity, but remains completely silent on the fact that this process mirrors contemporary practices in the Ottoman Empire and North Africa and thus indicates shared sensibilities.²⁸

It is entirely plausible, therefore, that Bello indeed communicated his wish to embrace Islam in the way described by Mitrovic. As it is, the episode indicates that the janissaries shared Christian-European sensibilities concerning the identity-forming symbolism of clothing, making Bello's discarding of the hat part of a symbolic language intelligible to Ottomans and Christian Europeans alike.²⁹ In this context, it is important to bear in mind that the Cretan—who would probably have known Italian and Greek and at least a few fragments of Latin—and the janissaries—who, in addition to Ottoman Turkish and depending on their places of origin, might have known Hungarian, a Slavic language, perhaps some Greek, and a few bits of Italian—would have been unlikely to have been able to sustain a coherent conversation in any one of these languages. Most probably, they would have had to rely on a mix of several languages and, more importantly, on non-verbal signs such as removing the 'Christian' hat. Admittedly, given that the drink which Bello and the janissaries shared may well have been alcoholic, there is a fair chance that the Cretan may have been less than fully conscious of the consequences of his actions. Since the possibility of inadvertent conversion is discussed at length in Chapter 3, suffice it to say here that, even if Bello did not mean to convert, the symbolic significance of dress, particularly headgear, remains a central element of conversion to Ottoman Sunni Islam.

In any case, upon conversion, Bello changed more than just his hat. As Mitrovic's description of the procession in honour of the Cretan's change of faith illustrates, his entire appearance was Ottomanized. Of particular interest in this context is the sumptuous 'scarlet pelisse lined with foxskins'. In all likelihood, this was a gift from the *beylerbeyi* of Buda who, as Mitrovic learned from the *çavuş*, a sort of bodyguard-cum-messenger, who was escorting the ambassador and his household to Istanbul, had also 'presented him with a handsome horse, and promised to give him pay to the amount of twenty aspers [*akçe*] a day'.³⁰ Gifts like these were customary for converts to Islam. In fact, the gift of clothes harks back to the Prophet Muhammad offering 'his mantle to his former opponent, Ka'b ibn Zuhayr'. As such, they can be read as an investiture with robes of honour, which symbolized 'the acceptance of the convert into the community' while at the same time displaying the wealth of the convert's patron and enhancing his prestige. The fur coat, after all, was not merely 'Turkish' dress, but an expensive item reserved for members of the Ottoman elite. After his conversion to Islam in 1666, the self-proclaimed messiah

²⁸ Matar, *Turks, Moors and Englishmen*, 175.

²⁹ Such shared language existed not only in the context of conversion. See, for example, Gábor Ágoston, 'Information, Ideology, and Limits of Imperial Policy: Ottoman Grand Strategy in the Context of Ottoman-Habsburg Rivalry', in Virginia Aksan and Daniel Goffman (eds), *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), 97–102; Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, ch. 3.

³⁰ Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures*, 17–18.

Sabbatai Zevi, too, was clothed in fur as a mark of honour and distinction.³¹ In the context of religious conversion, all these items taken together visually advertised the change of religion, serving as outward manifestations of the admission to the Ottoman community of Muslims.

Although, unusually, it is not made explicit, the procession in Buda probably celebrated not so much Bello's formal conversion to Islam, but rather his circumcision. This is suggested by Mitrovic's description of the celebrations following the change of faith of another member of Kreckwitz's entourage, the steward Ladislaus Mörth, in Istanbul one and a half years later: 'When this wretch was led to circumcision many hundred horse and foot soldiers went before and behind him past our house, all shouting ferociously, and wishing him joy, while he exhibited a joyful countenance, looked in at the windows, and carried himself haughtily.'³² Circumcision was, of course, the most durable physical manifestation of men's conversion to Islam, precisely because it inscribed the allegiance to the Muslim faith onto the male converts' bodies. For this reason, it served as a crucial mark of distinction. Early modern English authors, in particular, attached great significance to this act which was effectively equated with the amputation of the convert's Englishness and at once understood as a sign of a depraved sexuality—which circumcision was considered to help curtail from its worst excesses—and emasculation. This symbolic obsession with the loss of the foreskin appears to have been particularly strong in English minds not only in the context of Muslim North Africa but also India as late as the 1780s.³³ Nevertheless, the Inquisition, for example, generally took the absence of the suspected apostate's foreskin as a definite sign of his conversion to Islam. So did the authorities in the ports of Naples and Sicily in their search for Ottoman spies among Greek sailors and even the occasional English captain or entire parish communities would subject those who had returned from captivity in Muslim lands to this examination.³⁴

³¹ Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam*, 15, 131–2, all quotations from p. 15. See also Anton Minkov, *Conversion to Islam in the Balkans: Kisve Bahası Petitions and Ottoman Social Life* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 30; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 156–63; Stewart Gordon, 'A World of Investiture', in Gordon (ed.), *Robes and Honor*, ch. 1.

³² Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures*, 110.

³³ James W. Laine, 'The Body as the Locus of Religious Identity: Examples from Western India', in Dennis C. Washburn and A. Kevin Reinhart (eds), *Converting Cultures: Religion, Ideology and Transformations of Modernity* (Social Sciences in Asia, 14; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 334, 340; Bennassar and Bennassar, *Chrétien d'Allah*, 247–8; Rostagno, *Mi faccio turco*, 60–1; Colley, *Captives*, 288–9; Lucetta Scaraffia, *Rinnegati: Per una storia dell'identità occidentale* (2nd edn, Rome: Editori Laterza, 2002), 58–60; Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, 104; Vitkus (ed.), *Three Turk Plays*, 5; Nabil I. Matar, *Islam in Britain, 1558–1685* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), 52–3; Matthew Dimmock, *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 194.

³⁴ Bennassar and Bennassar, *Chrétien d'Allah*, 35, 54, 247–8, 328, 332–40; Ayşe Baltacıoğlu-Brammer, '“Mi Faccio Turco”: An Examination of Muslims in the Roman Inquisition and the Ottoman Reaction', MA thesis, Ohio State University, Columbus, 2012, 24–6; Christopher F. Black, *The Italian Inquisition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 145; Emrah Safa Gürkan, 'Espionage in the 16th Century Mediterranean: Secret Diplomacy, Mediterranean Go-Betweens and the Ottoman Habsburg Rivalry', PhD dissertation, Georgetown University, Washington, DC, 2012, 133–4; Matar, *Islam in Britain*, 66; Matar, *Turkes, Moors and Englishmen*, 72.

The 'Statute of the New Muslim' was very clear on the fact that circumcision was a matter of course when conversion to Islam took place in front of the *divan-i hümayun*, the imperial council. After the formalities of conversion had been taken care of and the convert had received his gifts, 'an usher takes and delivers him to the imperial surgeon on duty that day in the council. The surgeon immediately takes him to the designated corner and circumcises him [right then and there].'³⁵ How integral circumcision was considered to be is evident in the fact that, at least since the early seventeenth century, a surgeon was kept on standby at all times to swiftly perform this operation. In fact, Friedrich Seidel's description of Ladislaus Mört's conversion which emphasizes the speed with which the renegade was circumcised suggests that this service may already have been in place by the early 1590s.³⁶

Having said this, the requirement of circumcising neophytes was contestable. The Hanafi legal school, which was (and still is) dominant in Anatolia and the Empire's European dominions, considers circumcision merely a recommended practice, even in the case of the sons of Muslim parents.³⁷ Stephan Gerlach, who served as chaplain to the Imperial embassy in Istanbul in the 1570s, for instance, mentions 'an Italian apostate Christian . . . who . . . had become a Turk but had not been circumcised'.³⁸ Ottoman authorities themselves do not seem to have considered the circumcision test a reliable indicator of someone's conversion until after the Treaty of Belgrade concluded with Russia in 1739, when they began attaching considerable importance to this physical mark, albeit briefly. This agreement significantly altered the rules governing the return of Russian subjects who had been taken captive during the war. While previously it had been up to the semi-professional ransoming networks operated by various Christian-European states and religious orders to find and buy the liberty of captives, responsibility for freeing prisoners and compensating their owners now fell to the Ottoman state. This provided both a financial and an administrative challenge since captives were frequently in private hands and, as a result of trade in the Empire's slave markets, widely dispersed across the realm.³⁹ Not all captives were to be returned, though. Apart from the fact that the treaty applied only to Russian subjects, those captives who had converted to Islam in the meantime were to remain in the Ottoman Empire. But determining whether someone was a convert or not proved difficult and time consuming since that decision was easily contested not only by the

³⁵ As translated in Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam*, 191.

³⁶ Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam*, 191; Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 113; Seidel, *Denckwürdige Gesandtschafft*, 11. I am grateful to Günhan Börekçi for informing me in conversation that this practice was introduced no later than the reign of Ahmed I (1603–17).

³⁷ Schacht, *Islamic Law*, 204.

³⁸ *Stephan Gerlachs dess aeltern Tage-Buch* (Frankfurt, 1674), 80.

³⁹ Will Smiley, 'The Meaning of Conversion: Treaty Law, State Knowledge, and Religious Identity among Russian Captives in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire', *International History Review*, 34 (2012), 561–2; Smiley, '“When Peace Is Made, You Will Again Be Free”: Islamic and Treaty Law, Black Sea Conflict, and the Emergence of “Prisoners of War” in the Ottoman Empire, 1739–1830', PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 2012, chs 1 and 2; Y. Hakan Erdem, *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire and Its Demise, 1800–1909* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), 31.

individual concerned but also by Russian diplomats and the community in which the captive was now living. After all, in order to settle the question, Ottoman judges had to rely on the witnesses produced by either side and their own good judgement. Faced with this challenge, as Will Smiley has shown, the Ottoman state decided to establish circumcision as the only criterion for determining a captive's religious affiliation. This choice speaks volumes about the state's desire to reduce the decision to a quick and easy bureaucratic process. For it needs to be remembered that circumcision was neither strictly obligatory nor an exclusive symbol of adherence to Islam but also had an important place in Judaism—to say nothing of the fact that the practice was inapplicable to women and children below a certain age. Although the object on whose basis the validity of conversion was judged had changed from items of clothing to male foreskins, the principal logic remained the same as the one expressed in Ebussuud's *fetvas* two centuries earlier: the presence of certain outward markers was sufficient to establish the individual's membership in the Islamic community of believers. The circumcision test, however, was eventually abandoned in the aftermath of the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca (1774) to be replaced with a formal declaration of the convert to the Ottoman authorities in the presence of a Russian dragoman, a solution which had been a long-standing element of the *ahdnames* (capitulations) granted to Christian-European states.⁴⁰ In spite of these caveats, the available evidence suggests that, even before 1739, most male converts to Islam were, in fact, circumcised.⁴¹

The convert's outward transformation was not restricted to clothing and the body. New Muslims were also given Ottoman names. This renaming was, as Ehud Toledano explains in the context of slavery,

a strongly symbolic act; a mere utterance was intended to wipe out the enslaved person's identity and replace it with a new one. . . . In fact, naming was a dual act of detaching the enslaved persons from their previous world and reattaching them to a new and strange culture, so different in language, customs, and beliefs from their native ones.⁴²

By renaming converts, they likewise were at once symbolically detached from their 'previous world' and reattached to Ottoman society—regardless of whether they had been free or enslaved prior to their change of faith. Existing scholarship on religious conversion in a variety of contexts has pointed out that embracing a new religion is often represented as a fundamental change of converts' identities, not least so by converts themselves, which therefore forms a prominent theme in conversion narratives. The assumption of a new name is thus germane to the process of religious conversion and, accordingly, the act of renaming the convert frequently constitutes a crucial element in conversion rituals. In Christianity, for instance, the act of baptism effectively functions as a naming ritual, either in the form of christening infants or the

⁴⁰ Smiley, 'The Meaning of Conversion', esp. 564–8; Smiley, 'When Peace Is Made', 62–6.

⁴¹ See, for example, Bennassar and Bennassar, *Chrétiens d'Allah*, esp. 197.

⁴² Ehud R. Toledano, *As if Silent and Absent: Bonds of Enslavement in the Islamic Middle East* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 67.

Table 2.1. The six most common names given to Christian-European converts to Islam in my sample.

Name	Individuals	Percentage	
		Persons with known names after conversion	Entire sample
Mehmed/Mehemmed	7	20.0	5.1
Hasan/Hassan	4	11.4	2.9
Ali	3	8.6	2.2
İbrahim	3	8.6	2.2
Mahmud	3	8.6	2.2
Ahmed	3	8.6	2.2
Other	12	34.3	8.8
Total	35	100.0	25.5

baptism of the newly converted.⁴³ Such practices are not exclusive to the Near Eastern monotheistic religions. Converts to the lay Buddhist movement of Zhu Hong (1535–1615), for instance, were also renamed in the course of their conversions.⁴⁴

Table 2.1 illustrates the distribution of the six most common names among the thirty-four male converts in my sample whose Muslim names are documented. It comes as no surprise that Mehmed, and its variant Mehemmed, in honour of the prophet Muhammad, is the most popular first name, followed by Hasan or Hassan. Ali, after the last Rightly Guided Caliph and the prophet's son in law, ranges third alongside other prophetic names such as İbrahim (Abraham). In the context of slaves who had converted to Islam, Nur Sobers-Khan has shown that the names given to these converts 'often did not differ from the names borne by free Muslim males' and therefore 'allowed the slave to "blend in"', regardless of his geographical and social origins. The same, of course, also applies to free Christians and Jews, whether *zimmi*s or foreigners, who had embraced Islam. As a general rule, only the fictional patronymic *ibn* 'Abdullah marked a convert as such since 'Abdullah itself was rarely used as an actual given name, especially among members of the *re'aya*, the sultan's ordinary subjects. But this principle was by no means universal. Among renegades in the upper echelons of Ottoman society, other patronymics based on the names of God, such as 'Abdurrahman and 'Abdulmalik, may have been equally common.⁴⁵

⁴³ See, for example, the Chinese converts to Christianity and their baptisms mentioned in *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matteo Ricci: 1583–1610*, tr. Louis J. Gallagher, with a foreword by Richard J. Cushing (New York: Random House, 1953), 245, 352, 397, 467–70.

⁴⁴ Chün-fang Yü, *The Renewal of Buddhism in China: Chu-Hung and the Late Ming Synthesis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 92. See also Nicolas Standaert, *Yang Tingyun, Confucian and Christian in Late Ming China: His Life and Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 56, which explicitly compares Buddhist and Christian conversion narratives. There is nothing to suggest, however, that the ritual renaming in both cases were influenced by each other.

⁴⁵ Nur Sobers-Khan, *Slaves without Shackles: Forced Labour and Manumission in the Galata Court Registers, 1560–1572* (Studien zur Sprache, Geschichte und Kultur der Türkvölker, 20; Berlin: Schwarz, 2014), 221–35, quotations from p. 224; Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 89; Metin İ. Kunt, 'Royal and Other Households', in Christine Woodhead (ed.), *The Ottoman World* (The Routledge

Things were different in the case of female slaves who had converted to Islam, however. In their case, 'a more mixed pattern of naming' applied which ranged 'from religiosity to frivolousness'.⁴⁶ Alas, given the virtual absence of women among the group of Christian-European converts recorded in my sources, it is not possible to check for parallels. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume that, in line with Sobers-Khan's findings, similar naming patterns applied and that there would have been a comparable tendency to prefer 'colourful' names for those women who converted while enslaved and religious names, for instance in honour of one of the Prophet's wives or daughters, for those who converted in freedom.

While declaring one's belief in God and his prophet Muhammad was essential to becoming a renegade, the new spiritual belonging went hand in hand with a fundamental cultural recasting of the individual in question. So much so, in fact, that speaking of renegades' conversions to Islam captures merely one aspect of their experience. Rather, they underwent an often surprisingly rapid and extensive process of cultural transformation. After all, when becoming an Ottoman Muslim one not only had to embrace Islam but also needed to speak a particular language (Ottoman Turkish), function in a particular political and social environment (the Ottoman Empire), and behave and dress in certain ways (notably by wearing a turban or alternatively the headgear associated with certain military units such as the janissaries). Living as a Muslim also entailed changes in diet and eating habits. For Catholics in particular, conversion to Islam removed the restrictions on eating meat on Fridays, a violation of 'Christian' norms frequently noted by the Inquisition. Having said this, Islam does not require its adherents to consume meat or abstain from fish on that particular day of the week, although there may have been a measure of peer pressure on new converts to visibly break with Catholic food practices as a sign of their sincere commitment to the new faith and, more importantly, their turning away from the old one. Of course, well-informed contemporaries were well aware that Muslims are expected to abstain from alcohol and pork but by and large the sources on which this study is based remain silent on renegades' diets, except when noting their consumption of alcohol, often described as excessive.⁴⁷ Diplomats understandably had other concerns while most Central European travel accounts such as those by Stephan Gerlach and Friedrich Seidel

Worlds; London: Routledge, 2012), 107; Yvonne Seng, 'A Liminal State: Slavery in Sixteenth-Century Istanbul', in Shaun E. Marmon (ed.), *Slavery in the Islamic Middle East* (Princeton, NJ: Wiener, 1999), 37; Josef Matuz, 'Die Pfortendolmetscher zur Herrschaftszeit Süleymāns des Prächtigen', *Südosforschung*, 34 (1975), 52. I am grateful to Hedda Reindl-Kiel for sharing with me her knowledge of naming patterns among elite converts based on unfortunately unpublished research in *devşirme* recruitment registers undertaken by herself and Machiel Kiel in a personal communication on 4 Oct. 2011.

⁴⁶ Sobers-Khan, *Slaves without Shackles*, 224, 231–4, quotation from p. 231.

⁴⁷ Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 254; Vratislav z. Mitrovic, *Adventures*, 50–1; Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, *The Life and Letters of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, Seigneur de Bousbecque, Knight, Imperial Ambassador*, ed. and tr. Charles Thornton Forster and Francis Henry Blackburne Daniell, 2 vols (London: Paul, 1881), i.88–9; Rostagno, *Mi faccio turco*, 53, 70–1, 84–5; Scaraffia, *Rinnegati*, 58, 67–86; Black, *Italian Inquisition*, 151; Eric R. Dursteler, 'Bad Bread and the "Outrageous Drunkenness of the Turks": Food and Identity in the Accounts of Early Modern European Travelers to the Ottoman Empire', *Journal of World History*, 25 (2014), 211–15.

were written by Protestants to whom abstention from meat on Fridays was an individual decision, not a communal or even canonical requirement. In addition to what might be regarded as the more secular elements of the converts' transformation, even the new religion which they embraced was not simply *any* form of Islam; it was specifically the *Ottoman Sunni* variety which had begun to more clearly delineate itself from other forms of Islam over the course of the sixteenth century, notably the Shi'ism made dominant in Iran by the Safavid dynasty.⁴⁸ It is in this sense that, for all their inaccuracies, the common Christian-European metaphors of *turning* and *becoming Turk* to designate conversion to Islam were not mere literary tropes, but rather expressions of the extent of the transformation which conversion to Islam in the Ottoman context required. The Ottomans expected those who converted to Islam in the Ottoman realm to, in fact, adopt an Ottoman core culture in which adherence to Islam was only one, albeit a central, element.⁴⁹

CAPTIVITY AND CONVERSION

Islamic law famously divides the world into the *darūlislam* (Arabic: *dār al-islām*), the 'abode of Islam' governed by Islamic law and ruled over by Muslim sovereigns, and the *darūlharb* (*dār al-ḥarb*), the 'abode of war' controlled by infidels yet to be subdued by the warriors of faith. Formally, Christian Europeans, as inhabitants of the *darūlharb*, were classified as *harbis*, literally enemies but the term was more generally used for non-Muslim foreigners.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, Ottomans and *harbis* in most instances encountered each other in combat. In addition to prisoners taken during the sultan's military campaigns, warfare on land and at sea was endemic, resulting in a virtually never-ending stream of captives into the Ottoman Empire. This stream was swelled even more by slave raiding, carried out by the infamous Muslim corsairs and pirates operating out of the ports of Barbary and elsewhere in the Mediterranean, the border troops in the Adriatic, the Balkans, and Hungary, as well as the Crimean Tatars.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 97; Markus Dressler, 'Inventing Orthodoxy: Competing Claims for Authority and Legitimacy in the Ottoman-Safavid Conflict', in Karateke and Reinkowski (eds), *Legitimizing the Order*, 151–73; Gilles Veinstein, 'Religious Institutions, Policies and Lives', in Suraiya N. Faruqi and Kate Fleet (eds), *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, ii: *The Ottoman Empire as a World Power, 1453–1603* (Cambridge: CUP, 2013), 338–41; Denise Klein and Stefan Rohdewald, 'Religionskulturen—Strukturen, Praktiken, Diskurse', in Andreas Helmedach et al. (eds), *Das osmanische Europa: Methoden und Perspektiven der Frühneuzeitforschung zu Südosteuropa* (Leipzig: Eudora, 2014), 279–81.

⁴⁹ Compare Bulliet, *Conversion*, ch. 4; Sievert, *Zwischen arabischer Provinz und Hoher Pforte*, 50–1; Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 3–5; Cemal Kafadar, 'A Rome of One's Own: Reflections on Cultural Geography and Identity in the Lands of Rum', *Muqarnas*, 24 (2007), 11–12, 14. On the concept of core culture (German: *Leitkultur*), see Bassam Tibi, *Europa ohne Identität? Die Krise der multikulturellen Gesellschaft* (Munich: Bertelsmann, 1998).

⁵⁰ A. Abel, 'Dār al-Ḥarb', in *EP*, vol. ii (1965), p. 126; Bruce Masters, 'Dar al-Ḥarb', in *EOE*, 174–5; Masters, 'Dar al-Islām', in *EOE*, 175.

⁵¹ Mária Ivanics, 'Enslavement, Slave Labour and the Treatment of Captives in the Crimean Khanate', in Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor (eds), *Ransom Slavery along the Ottoman Borders (Early Fifteenth–Early Eighteenth Centuries)* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 37; Leiden: Brill,

It is impossible to establish any reliable figures of captives taken in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Robert Davis has estimated that between 1580 and 1680, the heyday of the Barbary pirates, on average a total of 35,000 slaves lived in North Africa alone at any given moment. Assuming an 'overall attrition rate' of Barbary slaves of up to 25 per cent, caused by death, manumission, and absconding, he surmises that about 8,500 slaves had to be taken every year merely to maintain the slave population of the Maghrebi littoral alone.⁵² Enslavement thus was a real possibility for anybody who travelled the Mediterranean or moved close to the borders with the Ottoman Empire. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Christian-European captives and slaves were ubiquitous at least in such imperial centres as Istanbul, Cairo, and Alexandria.⁵³

Once they found themselves in Ottoman hands, captives had a variety of options at their disposal. The more adventurous among them might try to escape and make it back to Christendom on their own, as Thomas Phelps claimed to have done in 1685. Doing so was fraught with danger, though. Depending on where the captive was and where he or she wanted to return to, the way might be long and perilous.⁵⁴

Admittedly this was true for all travellers, as the adventurous return to Nuremberg of the manumitted slave Johannes Wild illustrates. After he had regained his freedom in 1609, Wild prepared to sail to Istanbul from whence he hoped to return to the Holy Roman Empire. Only three days into the voyage, however, the ship came into a storm. Wild and his fellow passengers were shipwrecked, losing all their goods in the process. Now destitute, the German was forced to seek employment and eventually made his way back to Cairo where his former master once again took him into his service. His second attempt to make it to Istanbul a year later, too, almost failed—this time because of an attack by Christian pirates—had his ship not been lucky enough to escape. Once in Constantinople, with the help of the

2002), 193–219; White, 'Catch and Release', 3, 5–6, 30–3; Konrad, 'Soziale Mobilität', 214–15, 218–19; Peter F. Sugar, 'The Ottoman "Professional Prisoner" on the Western Borders of the Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Études Balkaniques*, 7 (1971), 83; Gunther Erich Rothenberg, *The Austrian Military Border in Croatia, 1522–1747* (Illinois Studies in the Social Sciences, 48; Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1960), 40–1; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 254 and 260–5. Numerous instances of captives taken during Ottoman raids into Habsburg territory in 1591–3 are listed in KA, HKR, box 9, file 1591/12/54 Registratur.

⁵² Davis, *Christian Slaves*, ch. 1, esp. pp. 14–15 and 23. Compare the estimates for the Ottoman slave trade with Africa in the nineteenth century mentioned in Ehud R. Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition in the Ottoman Middle East* (Publications on the Near East; Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998), 8–9.

⁵³ See, for example, Johannes Wild, *Neue Reysbeschreibung eines Gefangenen Christen* (Nuremberg, 1623), sig. X^v.

⁵⁴ Thomas Phelps, *A True Account of the Captivity of Thomas Phelps at Machaness in Barbary and of His Strange Escape in Company of Edmund Baxter and Others, as Also of the Burning Two of the Greatest Pirat-Ships Belonging to That Kingdom in the River of Mamora Upon the Thirteenth Day of June 1685* (London, 1685); Davis, *Christian Slaves*, 19. Phelps' story has been reprinted in Vitkus (ed.), *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption*, 193–217. Compare also Joseph Pitt's description of his escape originally published in 1704, and available in new editions in Vitkus (ed.), *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption*, 218–340, and Paul Auchterlonie (ed.), *Encountering Islam: Joseph Pitts: An English Slave in 17th-Century Algiers and Mecca* (London: De Gruyter, 2012).

Imperial ambassador Michael Starzer, Wild managed to join a caravan going for Poland.⁵⁵

If fugitives were recaptured, gaolers and slave owners as well as Ottoman officials frequently punished them, not least in order to set an example. That this was not universally so, however, is confirmed by an anecdote related by Wild. When he was still in Buda, one of his master's slave girls escaped together with another female slave who belonged to a neighbour. The women were soon apprehended and returned to their owners. While Wild's master apparently merely sold the girl, his neighbour resorted to corporal punishment.⁵⁶

Instead of trying to run away, captives could hope to be ransomed. This required the support of one's family and, especially in the Mediterranean, the ransoming agencies of various Christian states and religious orders such as the Trinitarians, to whose intervention Miguel de Cervantes, for instance, owed his eventual freedom in 1580. Along the Ottoman–Habsburg frontier, prisoners were frequently released in order to collect their ransoms, while fellow captives or occasionally, though illegally, a wealthy relative's servants acted as sureties and guarantors. Géza Pálffy has rightly called this phenomenon of 'ransom slavery' a 'profitable business'. This is true not only on both sides of the frontier in Central and South Eastern Europe but also applies to the Mediterranean, where considerable revenues were generated from ransom payments.⁵⁷ But ransoming was a slow and painful process. It often took years before ransom negotiations were successfully concluded, the money collected and then forwarded to the eventual recipients. There are numerous examples of individuals who, after having collected their ransoms, found themselves robbed and thus unable to fulfil their financial obligations. The experience could economically ruin even wealthy captives who had to sell their property in order to raise the necessary funds.⁵⁸ Moreover, most captives probably never had any realistic chance of ever being ransomed simply because they lacked both the

⁵⁵ For Wild's shipwreck see Wild, *Neue Reysbeschreibung*, sigs. X iv^r–X iv^v, for the pirate attack sig. Gg iv^r. While I have found no trace of Wild in Starzer's correspondence, the ambassador did provide similar assistance to one Paul Finck who had been released after sixteen years of slavery in Anatolia. See HHStA, Türkei I, box 92, bundle for 1610, fos. 215^r–216^v (Michael Starzer to Hans von Molart, Constantinople, 9 Dec. 1610).

⁵⁶ Wild, *Neue Reysbeschreibung*, sig. C^r–^v; Michael Heberer, *Aegyptiaca servitus* (Heidelberg, 1610), 152–3; Toledano, *As if Silent and Absent*, 112. On fugitive slaves see also Yvonne J. Seng, 'Fugitives and Factorums: Slaves in Early Sixteenth-Century Istanbul', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 39 (1996), 152–7.

⁵⁷ Géza Pálffy, 'Ransom Slavery along the Ottoman–Hungarian Frontier in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in Dávid and Fodor (eds), *Ransom Slavery*, 35–83, quotation from p. 39; Sugar, 'Professional Prisoner'; Daniel Hershenzon, '[P]ara Que Me Saque Cabeza por Cabeza . . .': Exchanging Muslim and Christian Slaves across the Western Mediterranean', *African Economic History*, 42 (2014), 11–36; Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures*, 126–7; Maria Antonia Garcés, *Cervantes in Algiers: A Captive's Tale* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2002), ch. 2; R. Brunschvig 'Abd', in *EP*, vol. i (1960), p. 33; Davis, *Christian Slaves*, 19–21, 176–9; Ivanics, 'Enslavement', 193; Smiley, 'The Meaning of Conversion', 561; Smiley, 'When Peace Is Made', ch. 1; Pál Fodor, 'Maltese Pirates, Ottoman Captives and French Traders in the Early Seventeenth-Century Mediterranean', in Dávid and Fodor (eds), *Ransom Slavery*, 221–37; Colley, *Captives*, 75–81; Matar, *Islam in Britain*, 5–10.

⁵⁸ Davis, *Christian Slaves*, 19–21; Pálffy, 'Ransom Slavery', 57–68; Maria Pia Pedani, 'Venetian Slaves in the Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern Period', in Stefan Hanß and Juliane Schiel (eds),

means and the connections, whereas so-called 'major captives' such as members of the nobility and senior officers could not only hope for the support of their families but to some extent also the respective rulers' treasuries in addition to having a real, if at times remote, chance of obtaining their freedom as part of an exchange of prisoners or even a gesture of goodwill in the context of diplomatic negotiations. Such gestures of goodwill were performed by all sides concerned. The English ambassador Edward Barton, for example, reported that the Spanish released eight enslaved Ottoman subjects in the context of peace negotiations with the Porte in 1597, promising the release of fifty more individuals.⁵⁹ Most captives, like Johannes Wild, though, remained slaves for considerable periods of time.

Rather than running away, slaves who were unlikely to be ransomed could stay put in the hope of eventual manumission. In Islam, the emancipation of a slave is regarded as a pious act and strongly encouraged both by hadith and the Qur'an itself. Frequently, masters and able slaves entered into contracts which granted the slave freedom after the passage of a certain number of years, the payment of a certain amount of money, or services provided for a given amount of time equivalent to that sum of money. Such contracts were known as *mükatebe* (*mukātaba* in Arabic). Arguably, this practice differs from paying ransom in degree only. But, if one can extrapolate from Sobers-Khan's findings concerning such contracts in sixteenth-century Galata, freedmen and women manumitted through *mükatebe* contracts were more likely to remain in the Ottoman Empire than 'ordinary' prisoners of war. In returning to Nuremberg, Wild, whose account suggests that he and his master had entered into such an agreement at least verbally, may have been the exception rather than the rule.⁶⁰

Especially if captives and slaves chose to endure their lot, they had good reasons for converting to Islam. Doing so, however, did not automatically result in manumission. Islamic law merely proscribes the *enslavement* of Muslims; a non-Muslim who had been enslaved prior to 'submitting to God' legally remained unfree. Nevertheless, prophetic hadith is explicit about the importance of emancipating Muslim slaves in particular. Muhammad is credited with the saying that 'the man who frees a Muslim slave, God will free from hell, limb to limb'.⁶¹ Moreover, even when they remained slaves for the time being, neophytes were treated somewhat more leniently and generally spared from the most arduous tasks such as rowing galleys.⁶² This was not a universal principle, though. In June 1583, twenty 'Hungarian prisoners' were brought before the *divan* where eleven of them

Mediterranean Slavery Revisited (500–1800)/Neue Perspektiven auf mediterrane Sklaverei (500–1800) (Zurich: Chronos, 2014), 320.

⁵⁹ Pálffy, 'Ransom Slavery'; Erdem, *Slavery*, 31; Smiley, 'The Meaning of Conversion', 563; TNA, SP 97/3, fos. 209^r–210^v (Edward Barton to Sir Robert Cecil, Constantinople, 28 Aug./7 Sept. 1597), at fo. 209^v.

⁶⁰ Brunschvig, 'Abd', 25–6, 30; Schacht, *Islamic Law*, 129–30; Sobers-Khan, *Slaves without Shackles*, pp. 70–8 and ch. 4; Wild, *Neue Reysbeschreibung*, sigs. U^r–^v and U iii^v–U iv^r.

⁶¹ As cited in Brunschvig 'Abd', 26.

⁶² Davis, *Christian Slaves*, pp. 21–3 and ch. 3, esp. pp. 73–82; Eric R. Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 113; Stephen Clissold, 'Christian Renegades and Barbary

'turned Turk'. In spite of having embraced Islam, the converts along with the other nine prisoners were sent to the galleys. This makes it tempting to conclude that the council may have been sceptical about the sincerity of the converts' motives.⁶³

The importance of captivity and enslavement in supplying the Ottoman Empire with renegades is clearly visible in my sample. Even though the context of conversion could be reconstructed from the sources for only sixty-nine out of the total of 137 individuals, of these, fifty-one, i.e. 73.9 per cent (37.2 per cent of the entire sample), converted during captivity. The vast majority, of course, did so while in Ottoman captivity. But this figure also includes two men whose conversion to Islam was linked to their imprisonment at the hands of their ambassadors. One of them was Kreckwitz's steward, the other a French goldsmith whom the French ambassador at the time, Jacques de Savary-Lanscôme, had had arrested and beaten for no other reason, according to Edward Barton, than 'to shoe upon his poore carcase his authority [*sic*]'. Consequently, the goldsmith 'turned Turke havinge as little grace therein as *Lancomo* [*Lanscôme*] havest but yett soe escaped'.⁶⁴ Conversion to Islam thus also was a way of escaping trouble with Christian-European authorities.

Not all renegades who had seen periods of captivity in the Ottoman Empire were still captive at the time of their conversion, though. A third member of Kreckwitz's party embraced Islam in 1596. His name was Eustachius von Pranck. Like Mitrovic and Seidel, he was among those of the ambassador's household who, after the outbreak of war in July 1593, were imprisoned first in the arsenal (*tersane*) and later in the Black Tower of the fortress of Rumeli Hisarı on the European shores of the Bosphorus. Despite the terrible conditions of imprisonment in the arsenal and the fact that he and the others were employed as rowers not merely on warships belonging to the Ottoman navy, but on vessels used to transport rocks for construction work in the capital, Pranck converted to Islam only after he and his companions had been released to return to Christendom in 1596.⁶⁵

Pranck's example is not typical, of course. Within the sample, it is even unique. Although the latter is far from complete and its representativeness, as discussed in the introduction, therefore questionable, anecdotal evidence suggests that the

Corsairs', *History Today*, 26 (1976), 509–10; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 130–1; Rostagno, *Mi faccio turco*, 64.

⁶³ HHStA, Türkei I, box 49, bundle for 1583 July–Aug., fos. 113^r–^v, 101^r–112^v, and 114^r–122^v (Friedrich Preiner to Emperor Rudolf II, Constantinople, 16 July 1583), at fos. 106^v–107^r.

⁶⁴ TNA, SP 97/2, pt 1, fos. 84^r–85^v (Edward Barton to William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Constantinople, 10/20 Apr. 1591), at fo. 85^r.

⁶⁵ Seidel, *Denckwürdige Gesandtschafft*, 49; Ralf C. Müller, *Franken im Osten: Art, Umfang, Struktur und Dynamik der Migration aus dem lateinischen Westen in das Osmanische Reich des 15./16. Jahrhunderts auf der Grundlage von Reiseberichten* (Leipzig: Eudora, 2005), 249; Müller, *Prosopographie*, vii.272–3. Note that Seidel confused Eustachius with one of his relatives who defected from the Habsburgs in 1601 and was subsequently killed in a military engagement during which Ali Paşa of Buda was taken captive. On this latter individual, see HHStA, Türkei I, box 84, bundle for 1601 Jan.–Apr., fos. 84^r–85^v ('*Batko Mathias* aussag so vom *Memhet Tihai*a herauf geschückht worden'), at fo. 85^r–^v; HHStA, Länderabteilungen, Ungarn, box 141, bundle for 1602 Jan.–June, fos. 134^r–137^v (Protocol of the interrogation of Ali Paşa, June 1602); KA, AFA, box 41, file 1602/6/4, fo. 98^r–^v (Archduke Matthias to Rudolf II, Vienna, 10 June 1602); file 1602/6/4, fo. 99^r–99^v (Albrecht von Eggenberg an Matthias, Raab (Győr), 9 June 1602); Müller, *Prosopographie*, vii.269–70.

majority of renegades 'turned Turk' while in Ottoman captivity, especially if they subsequently served in the upper echelons of the Ottoman military-administrative hierarchy. Significantly, this impression remains even if one ignores the testimony of those who, for one reason or other, appeared before tribunals of the Inquisition. Since apostate Christians could hope to be let off lightly, if they claimed to have been forced to convert or to have done so merely to reduce their suffering, only a minority of staunch idealists refused to renounce their new faith. In this, the Roman Catholic Church and, as far as one can tell from the work thus far undertaken on reconversion to Protestantism, the reformed churches followed the decision of the Council of Nicaea, which in 325 had ruled that the so-called *lapsi*, Christians who had denied their faith during the persecutions of the third century, were to be readmitted into the church after having undergone penance. In addition, seeking reconciliation with the church would help converts to Islam who had been enslaved by Christians as a result of capture to regain their freedom.⁶⁶

Whether the Ottomans did indeed forcefully convert persons and groups to Islam is a sensitive question which has long been a matter of intensive debate. Especially nationalist historians of the Balkans have time and again pointed to the *devşirme*, made infamous as the 'boy levy' in Christian-European writings, as the prime example of the forced conversion of Christian subjects. The Qur'an itself is very clear on the matter, enjoining the faithful that 'there shall be no compulsion in religion'. And another section adds, 'Had your lord pleased, all the people of the earth would have believed in Him, one and all. Would you then force people to have faith?'⁶⁷ On the other hand, as the discussion of inadvertent conversions in the next chapter suggests, there is some evidence which does point to the existence of less than voluntary converts to Islam.

The consensus among the majority of Ottomanists, however, is that, throughout the Empire's history, forced conversion, if it occurred at all, was an exception. The older argument that the material advantages—notably exemption from the *cizye* (poll tax, Arabic: *jizya*) levied only on the Empire's non-Muslim subjects—provided sufficient incentives for conversion in themselves has now become

⁶⁶ Bennassar and Bennassar, *Chrétiens d'Allah*, 20; Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople*, 118–19; Rostagno, *Mi faccio turco*, 12–23, esp. pp. 22–3, ch. 2, and pp. 64–5; Scaraffia, *Rinnegati*, 103–20; Black, *Italian Inquisition*, 150–3; Claire Norton, 'Lust, Greed, Torture, and Identity: Narrations of Conversion and the Creation of the Early Modern Renegade', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 29 (2009), 264–5; Martin Rheinheimer, 'From Amrum to Algiers and Back: The Reintegration of a Renegade in the Eighteenth Century', *Central European History*, 36/2 (2003), 209–33; Matar, *Islam in Britain*, 68–70; Rostagno, *Mi faccio turco*, 14–15, 19–20, 50. For a rare example of someone who remained steadfast in his conversion, see the case of Guillaume Bedos in Bennassar and Bennassar, *Chrétiens d'Allah*, 57–77. On the theological and church historical background, see Ekkehard Mühlberg, 'Lapsi', in David B. Barrett, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Erwin Fahlbusch (eds), *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, 5 vols (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans and Leiden: Brill, 1998–2002), iii.166; F. Hauser, 'Lapsi', in B. L. Marthaler (ed.), *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 15 vols (2nd edn, Detroit: Thomson/Gale and Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 2003), viii.333; I. Ortiz de Urbina 'Nicaea I, Council of', in Marthaler (ed.), *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, x.348; D. Faul, 'Donatism', in Marthaler (ed.), *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, iv.861–2.

⁶⁷ Verses 2:256 and 10:99. Here quoted from Nessim Josph Dawood (tr.), *The Koran* (5th edn, rev. repr., London: Penguin, 2003), 38 and 155. Compare Friedmann, *Tolerance and Coercion*, ch. 3.

doubtful, as has the view that the Ottoman state had an interest in preventing mass conversions for fear of eroding the state's revenue base. The *cizye* alone, while certainly an important source of income, was financially no more important than the taxes levied on Muslim subjects, all the more so since, with the institution of the so-called *avarız* tax levied on Muslims and non-Muslims alike in the late sixteenth century, the Ottoman state demonstrated both its willingness and its ability to tap into new resources. This change, however, had nothing to do with an alleged erosion of the tax base by conversion to Islam, but everything with the Empire's changed economic structure.⁶⁸ Private slave owners, on the other hand, in principle had a clear 'incentive to discourage conversion, as converts generally were not ransomed'; the conversion of a captive/slave could therefore incur an effective economic loss.⁶⁹ And even for the Balkans, which have often been viewed as the prime site of forced conversions, Anton Minkov has concluded on the basis of *kisve bahası* petitions, by which converts to Islam requested a certain sum of money from the sultan, that conversion was largely voluntary.⁷⁰

Nevertheless, the fear of being forcibly 'made a Turk' appears as a recurring theme in early modern narratives of captivity in the Ottoman Empire. Mitrovic claims to have been warned, for instance, that he should beware lest he 'be compelled, *volens volens*, to become a Turk' by Çiğalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa, the Italian-born renegade who was serving as admiral of the Ottoman fleet at the time.⁷¹ This theme also entered popular discourse at the end of the sixteenth century, although it seems to have remained less important than descriptions of gruesome mutilations and murders.⁷²

The need to convert to Islam in order to escape death is an equally important motif in captivity and travel accounts. Take for instance the case of Paul von Feldkirch. Feldkirch had been taken captive in Hungary sometime in the second half of the sixteenth century and, like Wild roughly two decades later, found himself a slave in Cairo. He claims to have resisted all invitations to become a Muslim. It was only when his affair with his master's widow—who had allegedly seduced him—came to light, that he found it necessary to give up his resistance in order to avoid the death penalty.⁷³

⁶⁸ Michael Ursinus, 'The Transformation of the Ottoman Fiscal Regime, c. 1600–1850', in Woodhead (ed.), *Ottoman World*, 425–6; Linda T. Darling, 'Public Finances: The Role of the Ottoman Centre', in Suraiya N. Faroqi (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, iii: *The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603–1839* (Cambridge: CUP, 2006), ch. 6; Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560–1660* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 6; Leiden: Brill 1996); Norton, 'Conversion', 29.

⁶⁹ Smiley, 'The Meaning of Conversion', 564, quotation from here; Smiley, 'When Peace Is Made', 31, 65; Davis, *Christian Slaves*, 125; Matar, *Islam in Britain*, 32.

⁷⁰ Minkov, *Conversion*, 110–11, 165.

⁷¹ Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures*, 160.

⁷² For examples of claims that the Ottomans pursued a policy of forcefully converting Christians to Islam, see Şenol Özyurt, *Die Türkenlieder und das Türkenbild in der deutschen Volksüberlieferung vom 16. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert* (Motive: Freiburger folkloristische Forschungen, 4; Munich: Fink, 1972), pp. 486–7, songs 147, stanza 4 and 148, stanza 3.

⁷³ Müller, *Prosopographie*, iii.359–61. On the trope of the seduction of male Christian slaves by their Muslim mistresses, see also Eric R. Dursteler, 'Slavery and Sexual Peril in the Early Modern Mediterranean', in Hanß and Schiel (eds), *Mediterranean Slavery Revisited*, 480–1.

Stories such as these may be little more than rhetorical devices. In Mitrovic's case, the episode is clearly intended to bolster the author's claim of his aptitude for learning Turkish, while Feldkirch's story provided a convenient excuse for his conversion and a dramatic curiosity for Christian-European readers. In fact, what we know about Ottoman law and jurisdiction suggests that, although Feldkirch had in theory committed an offence against God by sleeping with his master's widow, it would have been very unlikely that he faced the death penalty if found guilty in court, except perhaps at the hands of an angry mob. A more likely punishment for this kind of fornication, which was not technically adulterous, would have been a severe lashing, especially so if he was still a slave at the time. Indeed, only once did the Ottoman authorities in fact implement the death penalty for adultery, namely during the reign of Mehmed IV; and when they did so, it was a political decision which rested on more than shaky legal grounds.⁷⁴ Having said this, the legal intricacies may have been lost on the German slave and his fear of death may therefore have been real enough. If so, he had no more than a theoretical choice between death and embracing Islam. Calling such a conversion voluntary would be extremely cynical.

Marc Baer, too, has recently challenged Minkov's conclusions about the voluntary nature of conversion in the Balkans on the grounds of the genre of the sources underlying his study since, 'in the case of petitions, because Sunni Hanefi Islamic law stipulated that conversion must appear to be voluntary, no matter the actual circumstances in which Christians or Jews became Muslim, the scribes had no other choice but to record that it was so.'⁷⁵ Although plausible, especially in light of the fact that the scribes who recorded petitions and those who maintained official registers had undergone the same training, if they were not indeed performing both functions simultaneously, Baer's criticism remains an argument from silence and therefore largely theoretical. In any case, Minkov has convincingly argued that the level of personal detail recorded in many petitions shows that petitioners had a great deal of control over the contents of the text, even if the actual writing was left to Ottoman scribes.⁷⁶

VOLUNTARY MIGRATION

So far, I have concentrated on those who had entered the Ottoman Empire as *esirs*, that is, captives. That they could be enslaved in the first place is the result of their status as *harbis* according to Islamic law.⁷⁷ Nevertheless it is noteworthy that of the

⁷⁴ Walter G. Andrews and Mehmet Kalpaklı, *The Age of Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early-Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 272–4; Marc David Baer, 'Death in the Hippodrome: Sexual Politics and Legal Culture in the Reign of Mehmet IV', *Past and Present*, 210 (2011), 61–91; Schacht, *Islamic Law*, 128. See also the discussion of the legal obstacles surrounding prosecution for *zinā* (unlawful intercourse) in the context of Ladislaus Mörth's conversion in the section 'Legal Implications and Social Dimensions' of this chapter.

⁷⁵ Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam*, 193.

⁷⁶ Minkov, *Conversion*, 111.

⁷⁷ Pál Fodor, 'Introduction', in Dávid and Fodor (eds), *Ransom Slavery*, xii, xiv–xvi; Brunschvig, 'Abd', 26; Schacht, *Islamic Law*, 131; Smiley, 'When Peace Is Made', 9, 16.

sixty-nine cases in my sample in which the context of conversion can be recovered, there are seventeen which to all intents and purposes appear as instances of voluntary migration to the Ottoman realm.

At the time of his conversion, Niccolo de Bello, for instance, was legally speaking a *müste'min*, a tolerated alien or foreign resident. Travelling as part of Ambassador Kreckwitz's retinue, he was covered by the terms of the safe conduct granted by the sultan to the members of Emperor Rudolf II's legation. As *müste'mins*, the ambassador and his company enjoyed the special protection of their lives and property normally reserved for *zimmis*. Like *zimmis*, *müste'mins* could not legally be enslaved or killed.⁷⁸ Theoretically, therefore, *müste'mins* remained free and unlike *esirs* could not become *kul*, legally enslaved members of the sultan's household. Such a distinction between free and nominally enslaved members of the Ottoman elite, however, may have meant little in practice as early as the first half of the sixteenth century.⁷⁹

That Bello was a voluntary migrant to the Ottoman Empire is also suggested by the accounts of his fellow travellers Mitrovic and Seidel. Although the Italian had claimed that his reason for travelling with Kreckwitz's party was to find and ransom his brother, it seems that at no point was he under any duress which his conversion would have mitigated. Then again, it is plausible that his change of faith arose out of the hope of freeing his brother—provided, of course, the details related by Mitrovic and Seidel are accurate.

Travelling as part of a diplomatic delegation, of course, was not the only context in which one could voluntarily migrate to the Ottoman Empire. There were those who made their way to Ottoman territory as private individuals, sometimes, as Chapter 5 discusses, in order to settle with family members who had 'turned Turk' in the past. Family connections, however, albeit helpful, were not a necessary prerequisite. The Imperial ambassador David Ungnad, for example, reported the arrival of 'a Spanish captain . . . with one of his servants and a necromancer called Marco' in Istanbul on 30 March 1576. According to the ambassador's informant, Don Diego Osorio, the captain was 'Don Francisco Torellas, first cousin of Captain Pedro Torellas [and] has served our king [of Spain] for many years . . . and now is captain of the regiment of Lombardy'. Don Francisco managed to receive an audience with Sokollu Mehmed Paşa during which he produced a number of official letters as evidence of his rank in Spanish service and informed the grand vizier that 'he came here to become a Turk and serve this mighty emperor'. Three days later, the Spaniard was conducted to the *divan* where he was 'solemnly made a Turk and by order of Mehmed Paşa was named Mehmed Bey after himself'. Like Bello, Francisco/Mehmed received gifts, particularly 'a golden dress [i.e. kaftan] like the ones given to the embassies on their departure'. This was a distinguished

⁷⁸ Schacht, *Islamic Law*, 130–3; Joseph Schacht, 'Amān', in *EP*, vol. i (1960), pp. 429–30; Hasan Khalilieh, 'Amān', in *EP*³; Friedmann, 'Dhimma', in *EP*³, pars. 1, 8–9; Daniel Goffman, 'Negotiating with the Renaissance State', in Aksan and Goffman (eds), *Early Modern Ottomans*, 63–6.

⁷⁹ Metin İ. Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550–1650* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 45.

honour, indeed, one which is also reflected in the fact that Mehmed was allocated an income of 40,000 *akçe* per annum 'from villages belonging to the sultan's personal *timar*' (revenue income). After his formal conversion, the new convert was entrusted to the then admiral of the Ottoman fleet, Uluç Ali, for his circumcision.⁸⁰

Francisco/Mehmed's case suggests that some renegades, at least, consciously moved to the Ottoman Empire in search of social and material advancement.⁸¹ This is clear especially from the attention which the prospective convert paid to providing written evidence of his previous position in the Spanish military. Interestingly, Ungnad remarks upon his own amazement that, as rumour had it, the Spaniard had managed to take with him 'five more servants to Castelnovo [present-day Herceg Novi] with several chests containing his possessions' without his intentions having been detected by the Spanish authorities.⁸² It is very likely that Don Francisco converted to Islam, and thus changed sides, for similar reasons as Christoph von Roggendorf earlier in the sixteenth and Claude-Alexandre de Bonneval (Ahmed Paşa) in the eighteenth century. Both men had been disgruntled with their employers and decided to take their talents elsewhere.⁸³

Occasionally, relocating to the Ottoman Empire was also a means of escaping trouble 'back home'. Ungnad suggested, for instance, that the above-mentioned necromancer Marco had had to flee Christendom because he had run afoul of the duke of Florence.⁸⁴ One such refugee certainly was Adam Neuser who had been a preacher in Heidelberg. His study of scripture had led him to reject the Christian doctrine of the Trinity of God, a position which alienated him from the established Reformed clergy in the city. In 1570, Neuser wrote a letter to Sultan Selim II, in which he explained the essential similarity of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam as well as his wish to settle in the Ottoman Empire. Although the letter was never sent—and it remains unclear whether it was ever meant to be sent—it provided a sufficient pretext for having Neuser and his associates tried for heresy and treason, the penalty for which was death. Neuser managed to escape and, after having travelled around Europe for some time, ended up in the Ottoman Empire where he converted to Islam after first having been arrested on the suspicion that he was a spy. In spite of this spell of captivity, the bulk of the evidence suggests that Neuser's change of faith had been the result of spiritual concerns. Therefore, it is fair to regard him as a religious refugee.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ HHStA, Türkei I, box 32, bundle for 1576 Jan.–Apr., fos. 225^r–232^v (David Ungnad to Emperor Maximilian II, Constantinople, 2 Apr. 1576), at fos. 230^v and 231^r.

⁸¹ Konrad, 'Soziale Mobilität', 216–17; Bennassar and Bennassar, *Chrétiens d'Allah*, ch. 2; Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople*, 113–15; Scaraffia, *Rinnegati*, 4.

⁸² HHStA, Türkei I, box 32, bundle for 1576 Jan.–Apr., fos. 225^r–232^v (Ungnad to Maximilian II, Constantinople, 2 Apr. 1576), at fo. 231^r.

⁸³ Christine Isom-Verhaaren, *Allies with the Infidel: The Ottoman and French Alliance in the Sixteenth Century* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011), 76–8; Isom-Verhaaren, 'Shifting Identities: Foreign State Servants in France and the Ottoman Empire', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 8 (2004), 130–3; Konrad, 'Soziale Mobilität', 226–8.

⁸⁴ HHStA, Türkei I, box 32, bundle for 1576 Jan.–Apr., fos. 225^r–232^v (Ungnad to Maximilian II, 2 Apr., Constantinople, 1576), at fo. 230^v.

⁸⁵ Christopher J. Burchill, *The Heidelberg Antitrinitarians: Johann Sylvan, Adam Neuser, Matthias Vehe, Jacob Suter, Johann Hasler* (Bibliotheca Dissidentium: Répertoire des non-conformistes religieux ses seizième et dix-septième siècles, 11; Baden-Baden: Koerner, 1989), 107–11; Raoul Motika, 'Adam

Whether refugees like Neuser formed a significant part of the Christian-European convert population in the Ottoman Empire is impossible to say. Unfortunately, the evidence is insufficient to even allow speculation about the number of refugees for religious, political, or economic reasons among the apparently voluntary migrants in my sample. Some historians have suggested 'that periods of the greatest flow [of people] towards the Orient coincided with moments of crisis of European society, of economic depression, as well as of religious and political persecution'.⁸⁶ They likewise coincided with military engagements which created prisoners, captives, and slaves.⁸⁷ In any case, the line between seeking refuge and migrating to another ruler's territory because of dissatisfaction with one's opportunities may in some cases have been a rather fine one.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND SOCIAL DIMENSIONS

Conversion to Islam was as much a legal as a religious act, the two being rather like the two sides of the same coin. In the case of the Empire's non-Muslim inhabitants, for instance, the change in religious affiliation had consequences on the individual's tax obligations, since *zimmis* were subject to the poll tax, while Muslims paid other taxes which did not apply to non-Muslims.⁸⁸ Moreover, for converts like the Saxon Ernst Schmid who embraced Islam at the turn of the eighteenth century and the former voivode of Moldavia mentioned by the Scottish traveller William Lithgow taking this step was financially beneficial since it cancelled or at least reduced their debts with Christian-European creditors.⁸⁹ This was at least partially a result of the radical change in legal status under Islamic law which, in principle, privileged

Neuser: Ein Heidelberger Theologe im Osmanischen Reich', in Sabine Prätör and Christoph K. Neumann (eds), *Frauen, Bilder und Gelehrte: Studien zu Gesellschaft und Künsten im Osmanischen Reich; Festschrift Hans Georg Majer*, 2 vols (Istanbul: Simurg, 2002), ii.523, 529–32; Martin Mulsow, 'Fluchträume und Konversionsräume zwischen Heidelberg und Istanbul: Der Fall Adam Neuser', in Mulsow (ed.), *Kriminelle—Freidenker—Alchemisten* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2014), 38–45; Mulsow, 'Adam Neusers Brief an Sultan Selim II. und seine geplante Rechtfertigungsschrift: Eine Rekonstruktion anhand neuer Manuskriptfunde', in Friedrich Vollhardt (ed.), *Religiöser Nonkonformismus und frühneuzeitliche Gelehrtenkultur* (Quellen und Darstellungen zur Geschichte des Antitrinitarismus und Sozinianismus in der Frühen Neuzeit, 2; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2014), 293.

⁸⁶ Scaraffia, *Rinnegati*, 4. Compare Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople*, 113–15; Matar, *Turks, Moors and Englishmen*, 57–8; Rostagno, *Mi faccio turco*, 63.

⁸⁷ Sobers-Khan, *Slaves without Shackles*, 62, 64, 96–9.

⁸⁸ C. Cahen, Halil İnalçık, and P. Hardy, 'Djizya', in *EP*, vol. ii (1965), pp. 559–67; Friedmann, 'Dhimma', par. 1; Bruce Masters, 'Jizya (Cizye)', in *EOE*, 303; Masters, 'Dhimmi (Zimmi)', in *EOE*, 185–6; Halil İnalçık, 'The Ottoman State: Economy and Society, 1300–1600', in İnalçık and Donald Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, 2 vols (pbk edn, Cambridge: CUP, 1997), i.55–76; Suraiya N. Faroqhi, 'Crisis and Change, 1590–1699', in İnalçık and Quataert (eds), *Economic and Social History*, ii.531–44; Darling, *Revenue-Raising*.

⁸⁹ Hedda Reindl-Kiel, 'Das Ende einer Kavaliersreise—Beginn einer osmanischen Karriere?', in Reindl-Kiel and Seyfi Kenan (eds), *Deutsch-türkische Begegnungen/Alman-Türk Tesadüfleri: Festschrift für Kemal Beydilli/Kemal Beydilli'ye Armağan* (Bonner Islamstudien, 30; Berlin: EB, 2013), 120; William Lithgow, *The Totall Discourse, of the Rare Adventures, and Painefull Peregrinations of Long Nineteene Yeares Travailles from Scotland, to the Most Famous Kingdomes in Europe, Asia, and Affrica* (London, 1640), 140–1.

Muslims over members of other religious groups. In fact, unless protected by an *aman* or safe conduct, which turned them into *müste'mins*, foreigners had few rights under Islamic and Ottoman law. As was noted above, *harbis* could easily be enslaved. Ironically, through the loss of their freedom in this way, they gained a new measure of legal protection even from their masters.⁹⁰ Those captured on the battlefields were, of course, not entirely unprotected, either, since their status was governed by the treaties concluded between the Porte and the various European states.⁹¹ Nevertheless, regardless of the legal rights and entitlements granted to non-Muslims in the shari'a in general and Ottoman law in particular, only Muslims enjoyed full legal equality before the *kadı* (judge) in the Empire's shari'a courts. Crucially, the testimony of non-Muslims against Muslims was inadmissible evidence in court, making it theoretically very difficult even for a *zimmi* to sue a Muslim. Yet in spite of this disadvantage, Ottoman *kadis* seem to have protected the interests of non-Muslims surprisingly well. In seven out of eight court cases involving Christian and Jewish parties in his sample from the court records of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Istanbul and Bursa, Haim Gerber found that the judges had ruled in favour of the non-Muslims rather than the Muslims.⁹²

Still, as a matter of principle any lawsuit involving a Muslim litigant had to be tried in a shari'a court rather than the courts of the various non-Muslim communities or, in the case of *müste'mins*, the respective foreign ambassadors. This latter fact is of some relevance for the story of Ladislaus Mörth. While his motives are examined more fully in Chapter 3, the steward's conversion to Islam seems to have been connected to accusations of having committed criminal offences. By becoming a Muslim he ensured that such charges would have to be pressed before an Ottoman judge who, in this instance, would have been more favourably disposed towards the man than Ambassador Kreckwitz into whose jurisdiction the matter would otherwise have fallen.⁹³ Since the diplomat himself was an interested party in such proceedings, Mörth would have been unlikely to obtain a fair trial. Since the accusations against him, as far as they are made concrete in the sources, are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3, suffice it here to point out that they included allegations of treason and sexual misconduct. Under the circumstances, the need to produce Muslim witnesses who would testify against the Muslim accused makes it highly unlikely that members of the embassy would have been successful in obtaining Mörth's conviction. If at all, his alleged sexual misconduct might at worst have been tried as *zinā* for which the shari'a theoretically prescribes the death penalty by stoning. Yet for this offence Islamic law 'imposes so many

⁹⁰ Brunschvig, 'Abd'; Schacht, *Islamic Law*, 127–8.

⁹¹ Schacht, 'Amān'; Bruce Masters, 'Capitulations', in *EOE*, 118–19; Smiley, 'When Peace Is Made', 16–18; White, 'Catch and Release', 46.

⁹² Haim Gerber, *State, Society, and Law in Islam: Ottoman Law in Comparative Perspective* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1994), 15, 56–7; Schacht, *Islamic Law*, 132, 194; Masters, 'Dhimmi (Zimmi)'; Masters, 'Capitulations'.

⁹³ Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 217; Maurits H. van den Boogert, *The Capitulations and the Ottoman Legal System* (Studies in Islamic Law and Society; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 33–52; Norton, 'Conversion', 34.

structural obstacles to successful conviction that the penalties remain symbolic rather than real'.⁹⁴ The treason charges, moreover, would have been legally irrelevant for obvious reasons. Not only was disloyalty to the Habsburg Emperor hardly a matter for Ottoman courts, in this case the actions in question, if indeed they had been committed, would have directly benefited the Porte's military position in the Balkans. In Ottoman eyes, therefore, the alleged traitor was, if anything, more likely to be regarded as a hero than a criminal.

The convert's change in legal status was a reflection of the change in his social position as a newly admitted member to the *umma*, the Muslim community of believers.⁹⁵ In this sense, the legal consequences of embracing Islam emphasize the extent to which religious conversion in general is not merely an individual, but a communal affair. This is evident in the ritual acts themselves, particularly the assumption of a new name and the change of dress. Toledano's idea of the detachment of, in this case, the convert from one community and his or her reattachment to another is highly fitting since, in social terms, religious conversion involves changing group membership from the followers of one belief system to those of another. Moreover, as far as the Ottoman state was concerned, it could not 'read', to employ James C. Scott's concept of legibility, those of its subjects who remained unattached and hence were regarded as endangering good order.⁹⁶ In fact, the legal understanding of religious adherence, as noted above, derived largely from its social and cultural construction, either through participation in certain practices, including the compliance with certain dress codes, or, in the absence of a definitive, 'objective' test of Muslimhood, the testimony of witnesses who vouched for or contested the individual's religious affiliation in the presence of the *kadı*. Unlike in the Christian-European context which has a long tradition of bureaucratic record keeping in religious matters, this effectively meant that the validity of conversion to Islam—even in a legal sense—was often determined by the community in which the individual in question lived.⁹⁷

Social ties in any case played a crucial role in the process of conversion itself. Oghier Ghiselin de Busbecq as well as his successor David Ungnad, for instance, were invited to embrace Islam by the grand viziers Rüstem Paşa and Sokollu Mehmed Paşa, respectively. In the context of this invitation, Busbecq explained:

⁹⁴ Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 223; Imber, *Ebu's-Su'ud*, 37–8, 67, 89–94; Gerber, *State, Society, and Law*, 62; Nadia Abu-Zahra, 'Adultery and Fornication', in McAuliffe (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, i.28–30; R. Peters, 'Zinā or Zinā', in *EP*, vol. xi (2002), pp. 509–10; Leslie P. Peirce, *Morality Tales: Law and Gender in the Ottoman Court of Aintab* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 366; Andrews and Kalpaklı, *Age of Beloveds*, 272–4; Baer, 'Death in the Hippodrome', 69, 71–3.

⁹⁵ Hilmar Krüger, *Fetwa und Siyar: Zur internationalrechtlichen Gutachtenpraxis der osmanischen Şeyh ül-Islām vom 17. bis 19. Jahrhundert unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des 'Behcet ül-Fetāvā'* (Schriften der Max-Freiherr-von-Oppenheim-Stiftung, 10; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1978), 92–3, 108–11; Imber, *Ebu's-Su'ud*, 31–2; Schacht, *Islamic Law*, 124–5; Seng, 'Liminal State', 34.

⁹⁶ Toledano, *As if Silent and Absent*, esp. 24–34, 161–3; Bulliet, *Conversion*, 36; James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998).

⁹⁷ Smiley, 'The Meaning of Conversion', 561, 566–70; Smiley, 'When Peace Is Made', 22, 62–5; Bulliet, *Conversion*, 33.

The Turks deem it their duty and an act of charity, to make one offer to a Christian of whom they have a good opinion, of partaking in their rites and religion, in the hope of saving, if they can, a man otherwise destined to eternal perdition, and think such an offer is to be considered the greatest possible honour and mark of kindness they can show.⁹⁸

In those rare cases in which we can glimpse some details of the circumstances surrounding an individual renegade's change of religious allegiance, it would seem that this step was only rarely taken entirely without solicitation. Often a slave owner might encourage a skilled slave to convert, perhaps as a step in preparation of manumission.⁹⁹ In this respect it is noteworthy that Niccolo de Bello reached his decision to convert while he was in the convivial company of janissaries and, indeed, social occasions loom large in accounts of inadvertent conversions, as is discussed in Chapter 3. Moreover, romantic and/or sexual involvement with a Muslim might prompt conversion to Islam as in the rather dramatic case of Paul Feldkirch. For early modern English and French writers, in particular, the Ottoman Empire and the sexuality of its Muslim inhabitants became an object of obsession. In English drama, for example, renegades were frequently shown to have converted because they had succumbed to the wiles of a Muslim woman.¹⁰⁰ This fascination, however, was not a pan-European phenomenon. While accounts of deviant sexuality do appear in the accounts of Central European travellers and captives, the lure of Ottoman sexuality formed a much less prominent theme there; in diplomats' reports it is virtually absent. Moreover, Lucia Rostagno has noted that, although it was widely known that Muslims practised polygyny and concubinage, 'it is curious that the theme of polygamy is very marginal even in the interrogations' undertaken by the Inquisition.¹⁰¹

Even in the stories in which romance does play a role one wonders how many of those who ended up in the Empire, especially if they had been abducted or taken captive, having little hope of ever returning to their homes in Christendom, simply resigned themselves to a life in the Ottoman world with all that it entailed. Conversion may quite simply have been a matter of wanting to belong. And

⁹⁸ Busbecq, *Life and Letters*, i.235; Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 61. Compare Marcia Hermansen, 'Conversion to Islam in Theological and Historical Perspectives', in Lewis R. Rambo and Charles E. Farhadian (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 633.

⁹⁹ Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 72–3, 146–50; Tijana Krstić, 'Illuminated by the Light of Islam and the Glory of the Ottoman Sultanate: Self-Narratives of Conversion to Islam in the Age of Confessionalization', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 51 (2009), 42–3; Norton, 'Conversion', 35–6; Ginio, 'Childhood', 105–6.

¹⁰⁰ Matar, *Islam in Britain*, 52–3; Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, chs 4 and 5, *passim*; Vitkus (ed.), *Three Turk Plays*, 38.

¹⁰¹ Rostagno, *Mi faccio turco*, 56, 71; Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Edinburgh: EUP, 1958), 135–40; Dursteler, 'Slavery and Sexual Peril'. Dursteler's article is particularly noteworthy not only for his comparison of Christian-European views of Ottoman-Muslim sexuality with Ottoman-Muslim views of Christian-European sexuality, but also his efforts to reconstruct the realities behind the discourse.

perhaps having accepted fate, many might simply have adhered to the ancient wisdom of doing as the Romans do.¹⁰²

CONCLUSION

This chapter has explored some of the many dimensions of conversion to Islam in the Ottoman context during the early modern period. While a change of faith, quite literally the submission to God, was at least formally at the centre of this process, its implications were far more wide ranging in leading to an often quite sudden and extensive cultural transformation of the convert whose most obvious expressions were the adoption of an Islamic name and the styles of dress typically worn by the Muslim inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire, particularly the white turban.

Given that all individuals mentioned so far, with the exception of Paul Feldkirch who declared himself a Muslim in Egypt, were socialized in the western Ottoman Empire, it would be tempting to refer to their transformation as a process of *Rumicization*. Such a label, however, would be geographically unnecessarily narrow, especially since it is not at all clear whether Muslims in the Empire's North African provinces would have regarded themselves as *Rumi* and, even if they did, whether they were accepted as such by *Rumis* from Anatolia and Rumelia. Historians like Nabil Matar, for instance, tend to treat the Maghreb as a cultural space in its own right, not least because it was linguistically predominantly Arabic rather than Turkish.¹⁰³ What is ultimately more important is that the outward appearance of Christian-European renegades was changed to conform to what was regarded as the 'look' of Muslims in the regions in which they embraced Islam. The transformation undergone by converts encompassed not only their outward appearance but also their legal status by effectively conferring full legal membership in the community of believers, the *umma*, on those previously either regarded as second class, i.e. *zimmis* and *müste'mins*, or, as *harbis*, entirely outside the scope of protection granted by Islamic law. Finally, for individuals classed in one of the latter two categories conversion also entailed a new political identity as subjects of the Ottoman sultan. In the context of the conversion of non-Ottoman Christians and Jews to Islam in the Ottoman Empire, it would be more appropriate, therefore, to speak of a process of Ottomanization, a term which encapsulates a similar regional diversity as the early modern Christian-European usage of the word *Turk*.

For the same reason, the early modern metaphor of *turning Turk*, although seemingly misleading to modern minds, rather accurately reflects the complexity of the transformation which renegades underwent, even if for obvious reasons it

¹⁰² Norton, 'Conversion', 35–6; Suraiya N. Faruqi, *Subjects of the Sultan: Culture and Daily Life in the Ottoman Empire* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2000), 90–1; Matar, *Islam in Britain*, 28–30. For a discussion of the psychological consequences of captivity, see Colley, *Captives*, esp. 289–93.

¹⁰³ Matar, *Europe through Arab Eyes*, 5. Samuel C. Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose: Islam and England During the Renaissance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1937), 362–3 prefigures this distinction without further explanation.

would be more accurate to say that these converts had become Ottoman Muslims to avoid both the impression that Ottoman Muslims were ethnic Turks and the negative connotations inherent in the verb *to turn*.¹⁰⁴ Yet again, as Chapter 3 shows, the aptness of this verb in the current context is borne out by the fact that conversion was understood as a change of loyalties by contemporaries, regardless of whether they were European Christians or Ottoman Muslims.

It is worth bearing in mind that historical realities in Europe and the Middle East left no room for a separation between conversion to Islam and what, in modern terminology, would have to be described as a process of immigration and receiving 'citizenship' in the new home. It would simply have been inconceivable to both Christian Europeans and Ottomans that a Muslim could peacefully live and pray in all but the most exceptional circumstances in regions which were outside the 'house of Islam', the territories governed by Muslim rulers and Islamic law. For any Christian European wishing to embrace the religion preached by the Prophet Muhammad, therefore, there was no alternative to 'donning the turban' and 'becoming a Turk'.

¹⁰⁴ Compare the discussion in Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, 84–5.

3

A Change of Heart or a Change of Hat?

That the conversion to Islam of Christian Europeans required them to relocate to Muslim-ruled territories is a clear hint that the act of conversion had considerable political significance. This is often difficult to appreciate from the vantage point of societies in which religion has, by and large, come to be regarded as a private matter of conscience. In early modern Europe, however, campaigns against perceived religious deviance and the struggle for authority in determining correct belief frequently and actively involved the state and its agents, an involvement which in many regions provided additional momentum to the strengthening of the state's power over its territory and its reach into the lives of its subjects. Such developments, an integral part of the process of confessionalization first proposed for the Holy Roman Empire by the German historians Heinz Schilling and Wolfgang Reinhard in the 1980s, was by no means exclusive to Europe, even if the specifics and the eventual outcomes were different.¹ By changing faith, converts consequently positioned themselves within this struggle in which questions of faith and legitimate political power were so deeply entangled.²

Active participation in the religio-political rivalries of the day, moreover, was not limited to the moment and fact of conversion. In her study of autobiographical narratives written by converts to Islam in the Ottoman Empire, Tijana Krstić has highlighted these individuals' readiness to participate in 'the debate about the correct rituals and the most authentic, scripture-based path toward salvation'.³ A particularly fascinating example is provided by the Hungarian convert Murad Bey, born Balász Somlyai in today's Baia Mare (Hungarian: Nagybánya, German: Frauenbach) in Romania. Murad had been taken captive by the Ottomans during the battle of Mohács in 1526. He soon converted to Islam and subsequently

¹ For an English-language overview of the concept and the debates surrounding it, see Heinz Schilling, 'Confessionalization: Historical and Scholarly Perspectives of a Comparative and Interdisciplinary Paradigm', in John M. Headley, Hans J. Hillebrand, and Anthony J. Papalas (eds), *Confessionalization in Europe, 1555–1700: Essays in Honor and Memory of Bodo Nischan* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 21–35; Thomas A. Brady, 'Confessionalization: The Career of a Concept', in Headley et al. (eds), *Confessionalization in Europe*, 1–20.

² Tijana Krstić, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Stanford, CA: SUP, 2011), 99, 103, 106, 112–13; Krstić, 'Illuminated by the Light of Islam and the Glory of the Ottoman Sultanate: Self-Narratives of Conversion to Islam in the Age of Confessionalization', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 51 (2009), 47; Denise Klein and Stefan Rohdewald, 'Religionskulturen—Strukturen, Praktiken, Diskurse', in Andreas Helmedach et al. (eds), *Das osmanische Europa: Methoden und Perspektiven der Frühneuzeitforschung zu Südosteuropa* (Leipzig: Eudora, 2014), 302.

³ Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 98–142, quotation from p. 99.

penned several religious texts, among them a hymn praising Islam in parallel Latin, Hungarian, and Ottoman texts and a catechetical work for the instruction of New Muslims entitled *The Guide for One's Turning towards God*.⁴ Krstić makes a compelling argument for viewing the literary productivity of converts like Murad as evidence of the Ottoman Empire's participation in the so-called 'age of confessionalization'.⁵

The polarization which marked this period found its expression not only in religious tracts but more generally pervaded the ways in which individuals understood and verbally represented the world in which they lived.⁶ To the extent to which converts acknowledged this polarization, it was more than a fact of life to be passively accepted and integrated into one's thought world; it was also a feature which could be invoked and manipulated for the individual's own ends. In this respect the case of Ladislaus Mörth who had travelled to Istanbul with the Imperial ambassador Friedrich von Kreckwitz and embraced Islam in the spring of 1593, on the eve of the outbreak of war between the Ottomans and Habsburgs, provides valuable insights into how renegades themselves might have made sense of their conversion.⁷

Ladislaus Mörth's change of religion and its aftermath are unusually well documented. In addition to eye-witness accounts by his fellow travellers Václav Vratislav of Mitrovic and Friedrich Seidel, the man briefly features in reports and dispatches sent by Kreckwitz and his Venetian counterpart Matteo Zane.⁸ Moreover, the archives in Vienna preserve two documents which, in addition to conversations reported by Zane, appear to contain Mörth's own views. Detailed documentation of this kind which includes autobiographical testimony and allows a measure of insight into renegades' minds and souls is exceedingly rare.⁹ This fact alone is sufficient to justify a detailed examination of this particular case.

⁴ On Murad and his works, see Tijana Krstić, 'Of Translation and Empire: Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Imperial Interpreters as Renaissance Go-Betweens', in Christine Woodhead (ed.), *The Ottoman World* (The Routledge Worlds; London: Routledge, 2012), 136–9; Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 79–80, 98–110; Krstić, 'Illuminated by the Light of Islam', 35, 41–4, 47–54; Pál Ács, 'Tarjumans Mahmud and Murad: Austrian and Hungarian Renegades as Sultan's Interpreters', in Bodo Guthmüller and Wilhelm Kühlmann (eds), *Europa und die Türken in der Renaissance* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2000), 307–16; Franz Babinger, 'Der Pfortendolmetsch Murād und seine Schriften', in Babinger et al. (eds), *Literaturdenkmäler aus Ungarns Türkenzeit: Nach Handschriften in Oxford und Wien* (Ungarische Bibliothek, 1st series, 14; Berlin: De Gruyter, 1927), 33–54; Robert Gragger, 'Der magyarische Text von Murāds "Glaubenshymnus" mit deutscher Übersetzung', in Babinger et al. (eds), *Literaturdenkmäler*, 55–69.

⁵ Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, esp. 99–100; Krstić, 'Illuminated by the Light of Islam', esp. 46–7, 51–3, and 57–8.

⁶ See for example the German renegade Ali Bey's explanation of the difference between Sunni and Shi'i Islam in *Stephan Gerlachs dess aeltern Tage-Buch* (Frankfurt, 1674), 163.

⁷ In the sources, Mörth's name also appears as Mert, Marten, Mörthen, and Mortin (the latter in an Italian source). Compare Ralf C. Müller, *Prosopographie der Reisenden und Migranten ins Osmanische Reich (1396–1611)*, 10 vols (Leipzig: Eudora, 2006), v.441–3. I follow the spelling used most commonly in the keywords written in the margins of the protocols of the Inner Austrian Aulic War Council.

⁸ A search in the correspondence of the English ambassador Edward Barton has turned up no reference to this man but there is a significant gap in reports from Istanbul to England between January and July 1593.

⁹ Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 98–9; Krstić, 'Illuminated by the Light of Islam', 36.

LADISLAUS MÖRTH'S LIFE BEFORE CONVERSION

As much information as there is about Mört, relatively little is known about his life prior to entering Kreckwitz's service. While Mitrovic remains completely silent on the man's biography, Seidel claims that he had studied in Rome for six years. The records of the Collegium Germanicum et Hungaricum, however, only confirm that the later steward had attended courses there for nine months from January to September 1571.¹⁰ In all likelihood, Mört belonged to the nobility, a fact suggested both by his identification as 'Ladislaus Marten zu Altenburg' and Mitrovic's report that he was married to a daughter of the old Bohemian house of Pernstein with whom he reportedly had a son.¹¹ Still, the reference to Altenburg is ambiguous since there were at least four communities in Central Europe known by that name to German speakers in the sixteenth century: one in Lower Austria, another in Silesia (now part of Thuringia), present-day Staré Hradý in Bohemia, and Magyaróvár (modern Mosonmagyaróvár) in Hungary. Of these four places, only Magyaróvár can be safely excluded since contemporary documents frequently, if not universally, refer to this important fortress on the Habsburg–Ottoman border as 'Hungarisch Altenburg'.¹² Zane variously labelled Mört a Croat and a Bavarian, while an 'official' history of the Habsburg military campaigns of 1592–4 calls Mört a Silesian, pointing to the Thuringian Altenburg.¹³ To add to the mystery, an identification such as 'Ladislaus Marten zu Altenburg' may refer neither to his place of birth nor the seat of his family but rather to the location where he owned

¹⁰ Friedrich Seidel, *Denckwürdige Gesandtschaft an die Ottomannische Pforte, Welche ehmahls auf Röm. Kays. Maj. Rudolphi II. Hohen Befehl Herr Fridrich von Kreckwitz . . . verrichtet* (Görlitz, 1711), 11; Archive of the Collegium Germanicum et Hungaricum, Rome, Hist. 145 (Girolamo Nappi, 'Annali del Seminario Romano'), fo. 34^v. I am grateful to the Collegium's archivist Markus Pillat, S. J. for looking up this piece of information and to Noel Malcolm for suggesting in the first place that Mört may have attended the college as well as providing me with detailed directions which made locating the relevant entry infinitely easier.

¹¹ Václav Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures of Baron Wenceslas Wratislav of Mitrowitz*, tr. A. H. Wratislav (London: Bell and Daldy, 1862), 110; Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Des Freyherrn von Wratislav merkwürdige Gesandtschaftsreise von Wien nach Konstantinopel: So gut als aus dem Englischen übersezt* (Leipzig, 1787), 256; Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Přibody Václava Vratislava z Mitrovic*, ed. Jiří Daňhelka (Prague: Československý Spisovatel, 1950), 110; Müller, *Prosopographie*, v.441–3; Ernst Heinrich Kneschke, *Neues Allgemeines Deutsches Adels-Lexicon*, 9 vols (Leipzig: Voigt, 1859–70), i.170–2. Quotation from HHStA, Türkei I, box 81, bundle for 1593 July–Aug., fos. 210^{r–v} and 214^{r–v} ('Copi deren schriften so Ladislaus Marten zu Altenburg ietzo Alibeg genandt, in Constantinopel wid[er] I[hren] Oratorem Sulthano ubergeben', n.d.), at fo. 214^v.

¹² See, for instance, KA, HKR, vol. xcii (1594 Expedit), fo. 100^r; HHStA, Türkei I, box 56, bundle for 1582 Apr.–May, fos. 114^r–115^v (Stefan Nyáry von Bedey to Emperor Rudolf II, Buda, 16 May 1582), at fo. 114^r. On Magyaróvár's role in the Habsburg frontier defence, see Géza Pálffy, 'The Origins and Development of the Border Defence System against the Ottoman Empire in Hungary (up to the Early Eighteenth Century)', in Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor (eds), *Ottomans, Hungarians, and Habsburgs in Central Europe: The Military Confines in the Era of Ottoman Conquest* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 20; Leiden: Brill, 2000), esp. 55; József Kelenik, 'The Military Revolution in Hungary', in Dávid and Fodor (eds), *Ottomans, Hungarians, and Habsburgs*, 138.

¹³ *CSP Venice*, ix.81–2, no. 189 (Matteo Zane to the Doge and Senate of Venice, Constantinople, 23 July 1593), at p. 82; ix.96–7, no. 197 (Zane to Doge and Senate, Constantinople, 2 Aug. 1593), at p. 96; KA, AFA, box 31, file 1592/13/2, fos. 363^r–375^v ('Wahrhafter Bericht über die Begebenheiten des Türkenkrieges von den Jahren 1592, 1593 und 1594'), at fos. 364^v–365^r.

land—land which he might have acquired upon ennoblement. In any case, the ambassador's suite contained Austrians as well as Bohemians, Silesians, and Hungarians.¹⁴

The most detailed source for Mörtz's biography is a document contained in the *Turcica* collection at the Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv in Vienna. This text of two folios purports to be the German translation of a petition which the steward presented to Sultan Murad III after his conversion. That Mörtz petitioned the sultan is mentioned in Mitrovic's memoirs and it is entirely plausible that the Imperial ambassador was able to obtain a copy, a translation of which he then forwarded to Vienna.¹⁵

The document's authenticity as a translation is confirmed above all by the close correspondence of its structure and contents with the *kisve bahası* petitions studied by Anton Minkov. Through such petitions, New Muslims in the Ottoman Empire requested favours, primarily garments or their monetary equivalents, from the sultan. It needs to be noted, however, that this particular text does not fully conform to the diplomatic model described by Minkov, either because the genre had not acquired that specific form yet or, even more likely, because the translation is incomplete, leaving out in particular the customary and highly standardized opening and closing formulae. It was not uncommon to omit such formalistic set pieces in copies and translations in order to save time, ink, and paper.¹⁶ In addition, several words and phrases hint at the Ottoman original on which the text was based. Mörtz, for instance, is described as 'des Eltzy Khyheia', a contemporary German (and grammatically Germanized) rendition of the Turkish *elçi kahyası* (steward or deputy of the ambassador).¹⁷ Like the converts studied by Minkov, Mörtz certainly did not write the petition himself—a task for which he lacked the language skills at that point—but was aided by an Ottoman scribe familiar with the language and literary form to which the document would have to adhere in order to increase its chances of success. This is not to say that Mörtz would automatically have had little influence on the text. On the contrary, as Minkov has argued, the amount of personal detail which was usually not strictly necessary for *kisve bahası* petitions to fulfil their purpose should be seen as evidence of the petitioners' active involvement in the authorship of the text.¹⁸

¹⁴ Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Přibody*, 71–3; Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures*, 64–5.

¹⁵ HHStA, Türkei I, box 81, bundle for 1593 July–Aug., fos. 210^r–^v and 214^r–^v ('Copi deren schriften'); Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures*, 116.

¹⁶ Anton Minkov, *Conversion to Islam in the Balkans: Kisve Bahası Petitions and Ottoman Social Life* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 30; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 116–44, 152. Compare also the petitions reproduced and translated in the appendix to Minkov's book. An Italian translation of the sultan's order announcing the extension of the peace with the Austrian Habsburgs in 1575, for instance, simply prefaces the body of the command with 'After the solemn titles' ('Dopo li solemnî Tituli'). See HHStA, Türkei I, box 32, bundle for 1575 Sept.–Nov., fos. 237^r–238^v ('Die erst Copi literarum solemnium'), at fo. 237^r.

¹⁷ HHStA, Türkei I, box 81, bundle for 1593 July–Aug., fos. 210^r–^v and 214^r–^v ('Copi deren schriften'), at fo. 210^r.

¹⁸ Minkov, *Conversion*, 111.

At least part of this biographical information about Mörrth provided in the petition can be corroborated by external sources. This is particularly true of the claim that the steward had served 'for eight years in a row [. . . on the Habsburg–Ottoman border] in Croatia'. Even though the petition consistently exaggerates Mörrth's military rank—quite probably a problem of translation to Ottoman Turkish and retranslation to German, possibly via Italian at each step—the general information about his service in Croatia is confirmed by the protocols of the Inner Austrian Aulic War Council according to which Mörrth indeed served in the fortresses of Karlovac (German: Karlstadt) and Bihać (German: Wihitsch), as indicated in the petition, between 1583 and 1591. In February of the latter year, his dismissal from the fortress of Bihać was registered, following his absence from his post for several months.¹⁹ This entry gives Mörrth's rank as a *Fähnrich*, literally ensign or standard bearer, which roughly corresponds to a sub- or second lieutenant. Although junior to the ranks mentioned in the petition, notably the claim that Mörrth had been *Oberfähnrich* in Bihać, the *Fähnrich* was an officer of important tactical as well as symbolical relevance.²⁰ Nevertheless, there is no evidence to support the convert's claim that he had been 'a commanding officer', which implies a higher rank, throughout his service in Croatia.²¹ By September 1591, only months after his dismissal from military service, Mörrth had entered Ambassador Friedrich von Kreckwitz's service as his steward and was preparing to travel to Istanbul along with the rest of the ambassador's company.²²

Other claims made in Mörrth's petition are more difficult to verify and would require access to additional archival collections. Given that he left the Collegium Germanicum at the beginning of September 1571, he may very well have participated in the Battle of Lepanto, which took place in October, and it is also possible that he participated in the campaigns of the previous year related to the War of Cyprus. Even his association with the Knights of St John, with whom he claimed to have sailed 'often', is likely to contain at least a kernel of truth and, if so, probably mirrors Michael Heberer's enlistment on a galley flying the Maltese flag in the 1580s, after he had completed his studies at university, 'in order to learn languages and try myself [in battle]'.²³

Admittedly, none of these correspondences in themselves fully exclude the possibility that the document is a fabrication intended to either destroy Mörrth's

¹⁹ HHStA, Türkei I, box 81, bundle for 1593 July–Aug., fos. 210^{r–v} and 214^{r–v} ('Copi deren schriften'), at fo. 210^r; KA, IÖHKR, Croatia, vol. iv (1589–91), fos. 24^v–25^r, no. 7. The earliest reference to Mörrth in the Austrian archives dates from March 1583 and appears in KA, IÖHKR, Croatia, vol. ii (1579–83), fo. 30^r, no. 2.

²⁰ For a discussion of the organization of infantry (*Landsknechte*) regiments in the German-speaking lands during the early modern period, see Reinhard Baumann, *Landsknechte: Ihre Geschichte und Kultur vom späten Mittelalter bis zum Dreißigjährigen Krieg* (Munich: Beck, 1994), ch. 4, esp. pp. 92–8. The rank of *Fähnrich* is discussed on pp. 97–8.

²¹ HHStA, Türkei I, box 81, bundle for 1593 July–Aug., fos. 210^{r–v} and 214^{r–v} ('Copi deren schriften'), at fo. 210^r.

²² Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures*, 2, 6–7.

²³ Michael Heberer, *Aegyptiaca servitus* (Heidelberg, 1610), 160. Heberer was sailing with the Knights of St John when he was captured.

reputation or exonerate Friedrich von Kreckwitz from his handling of the diplomatic conflict at the eve of the Long War. As becomes clear in Chapter 4, the ambassador and those who worked closely with him indeed had reasons for wanting to blacken the former steward's name. Yet there is absolutely no evidence of such a conspiracy. It is reasonable, therefore, to treat the document as authentic.

CONFESSIONALIZING RHETORIC

Mörth's petition to the sultan provides rare insight into how he himself gave meaning to his change of faith. Although Seidel characterized the steward as a 'first-rate Catholic' ('trefflicher *Catholicus*')—which in light of Seidel's Lutheranism may, in fact, be more insult than praise—Mörth was first and foremost a soldier rather than a scholar.²⁴ Unlike Murad Bey, who actively engaged with the theological debates in Christendom as well as the Ottoman Empire, the steward evinced a much more pragmatic take on religion.²⁵ Having served in the Mediterranean as well as on the Croatian frontier, Mörth would certainly have had the chance to acquire a modicum of knowledge about Islam and interact with Ottoman Muslims in the battlefield, prison cells, the rowing banks of galleys, during low-level negotiations, and possibly during one of the occasional tournaments staged between local detachments from both sides.²⁶ No doubt he was also aware of the stories of rewards bestowed upon converts to Islam and the opportunities for social advancement open to them.

At least on the surface, Mörth conformed to the pattern of these stories. According to Mitrovic's memoirs, the renegade was not only awarded the title of *bey* but also received a daily income of 40 *akçe*, that is, just over 14,000 *akçe* per lunar year. At 20,000 *akçe* annually, Mörth's petition values the grant even higher, placing it at the upper end of the scale of *timars* (revenue grants) allocated to members of the provincial cavalry who otherwise held no offices. Crucially, the petition reveals that, at least at this point in time, Grand Vizier Koca Sinan Paşa had not awarded an actual grant, but merely promised that a *timar* would be allocated to the new convert at some point in the future, quite possibly from lands yet to be conquered.²⁷ This piece of information is significant because it suggests that Koca

²⁴ Seidel, *Denckwürdige Gesandtschaft*, 11.

²⁵ Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 103–5; Krstić, 'Illuminated by the Light of Islam', 46–8.

²⁶ Josip Vrandečić, 'Had an Ottoman Combatant Any Chance to Win the Love of a Daughter of the Rector of the Dalmatian Town Zadar? Islam in Ottoman Dalmatia in the 16th and 17th Century and Its Coexistence with the Christian World of Neighboring Venetian Dalmatia', *Radovi: Razdvo Povijesnih Znanosti*, 34 (1995), 163–83, 163. I am grateful to William O'Reilly for bringing this article to my attention. See also HHStA, Türkei I, box 49, bundle for 1583 July–Aug., fos. 217^r–218^v ('Vorher gehet, was dem Herrn *Oratori* den 19. Augusti [15]83 ist geschriben worden'), at fos. 217^r, 218^r.

²⁷ Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures*, 110; HHStA, Türkei I, box 81, bundle for 1593 July–Aug., fos. 210^r–^v and 214^r–^v ('Copi deren schriften'), at fo. 210^r–^v; Metin İ. Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550–1650* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 9–13.

Sinan did perhaps not yet fully trust the renegade and the sincerity of his commitment to the sultan. This impression is further supported by Bailo Matteo Zane's report of a conversation with the former steward in which the latter claimed that his participation in the search of the Imperial embassy had been instigated by the grand vizier as 'proof that . . . [Mörth] was not shamming Islam'.²⁸

Mörth's financial situation immediately following his conversion, therefore, was probably rather precarious: 'Most Merciful Emperor', he lamented,

I have nothing with which to support myself and have become the object of my enemies the infidels' ridicule because they know that at home I have left behind property as well as honours and titles. But now I walk the face of the Earth as a stranger who has nothing and finds himself in great poverty.²⁹

Consequently, Mörth appealed to the sultan's mercy as well as his political and religious pride:

I therefore beg Your Great Majesty to grant me some grace and help out of Your Imperial Charity so that I can appropriately equip myself with garments and horses and honourably serve Your Great and Felicitous Majesty as befits my rank and birth . . . and present myself before my enemies' lands and villages. Then these infidels will see and recognize what I have done and to whom I have betaken myself and [realize] that Your Great Majesty receives, welcomes, and promotes those who take refuge at Your Sublime and Felicitous Porte with mercy and clemency. This will cause more people of honour and rank to come hither and surrender themselves to Your Great Majesty.³⁰

This last passage obviously plays on the inter-imperial rivalry between the House of Osman and the Austrian Habsburgs in terms remarkably evocative of Mustafa Ali's reminder to the sultan 'to show the right measure of honor to those who come from another country . . . so that many more might be caused to come, too, to leave the side of the enemy' and join the Ottoman cause. What the 'right measure' was, of course, was open to debate. But in Mörth's view the status and position he had enjoyed in Christian Europe provided the natural yardstick. At the same time, the renegade invoked his 'rank and birth' not merely as a standard to which any gifts given to him needed to measure up, but more explicitly as a guarantor of his loyalty. After all, men of his station were expected to serve and fight for their respective rulers. Mörth rhetorically simply extended this obligation to the sultan, thus endowing the personal pledge of loyalty expressed in the petition as well as inherent in his conversion to Islam with an additional dimension of social obligation. Using such Christian-European categories which played only a marginal role in Ottoman

²⁸ *CSP Venice*, ix.96–7, no. 197 (Zane to Doge and Senate, Constantinople, 2 Aug. 1593), at p. 96. These events are discussed in detail in the section 'Intelligence and (dis)information' in Chapter 4.

²⁹ HHStA, Türkei I, box 81, bundle for 1593 July–Aug., fos. 210^{r–v} and 214^{r–v} ('Copi deren schriften'), at fo. 210^{r–v}.

³⁰ HHStA, Türkei I, box 81, bundle for 1593 July–Aug., fos. 210^{r–v} and 214^{r–v} ('Copi deren schriften'), at fo. 210^v.

conceptions, Mörtz unmistakably intended to bolster his claim to membership in the *seyfiye*.³¹

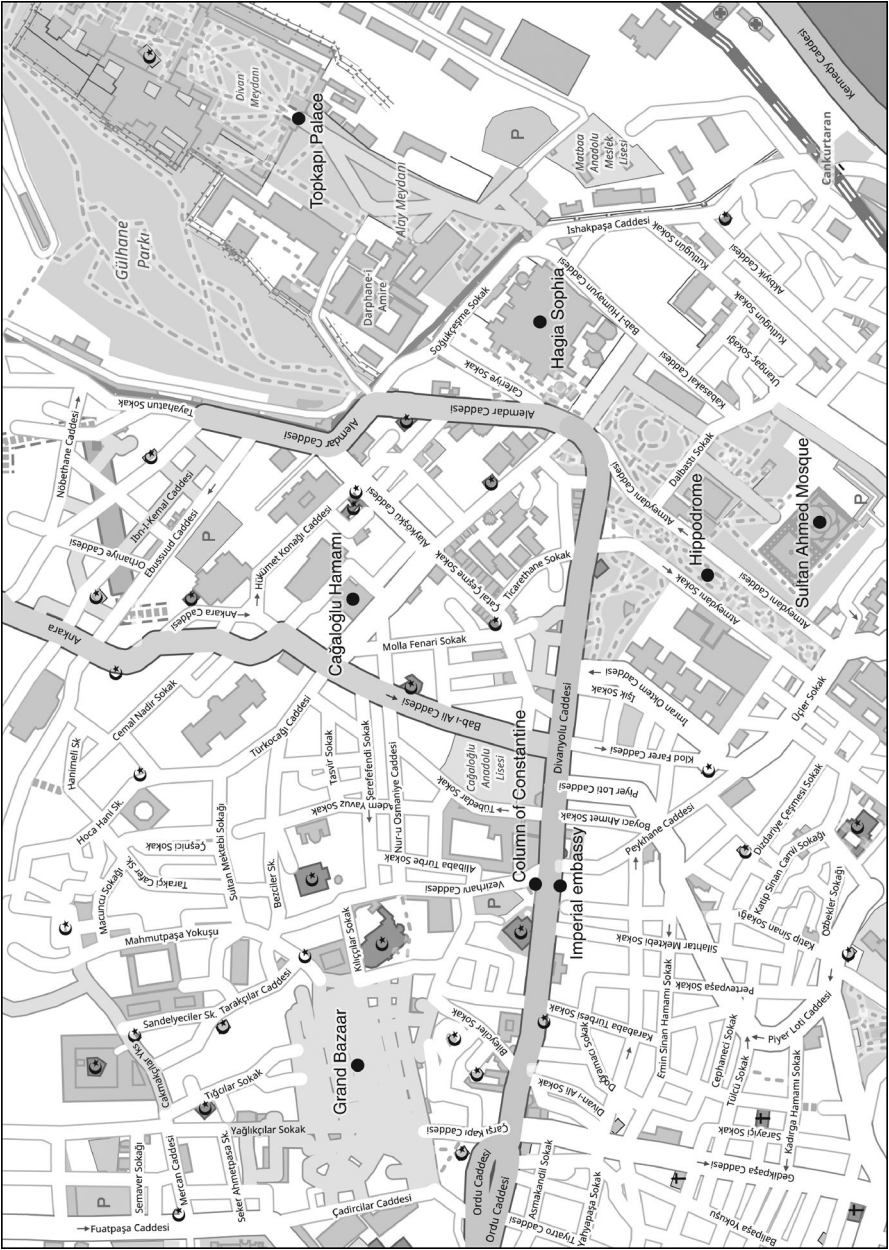
Although it would be an exaggeration to claim that the struggle for supremacy between the two dynasties was fought not merely over territory and taxable subjects, but also as a battle for souls in full missionary zeal, the Ottomans nevertheless were well aware of the symbolic capital inherent in the religious conversion of the Imperial ambassador's steward. This becomes clear from Mitrovic's description of the festivities held in celebration of Mörtz's conversion. As the Bohemian reports, these included a procession along what is today's Divan Yolu Caddesi in Istanbul's Sultanahmet quarter, passing the building in which the Imperial embassy was housed. Although the so-called *elçi han* has long since disappeared, it once stood opposite the Column of Constantine, now known as Çemberlitaş Sütunu (see Map 3.1). The route—or, perhaps more accurately, the accommodation for Imperial legations—had surely been chosen with great care to facilitate this form of symbolic communication with the Emperor's representative which he was expected to relay to Vienna. Although Kreckwitz seems not to have reported the festivities surrounding Mörtz's circumcision, at other times his predecessors described victory processions during which captives taken in battle were driven along the same route.³² Just like these parades of the spoils of war, the conversion of the ambassador's steward was a symbolic victory over the Habsburgs which needed to be publicly communicated and celebrated.³³

It is not surprising, therefore, that Mörtz, in his petition to Murad III, explicitly linked his new religious affiliation with a declaration of loyalty to the Ottoman sultan. As he explained,

³¹ *Muṣṭafā 'Alī's Counsel for Sultans of 1581*, ed. and tr. Andreas Tietze, 2 vols (Forschungen zur islamischen Philologie und Kulturgeschichte, 6–7; Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1979–82), i.62–4, quotation from p. 62. Mustafa Ali, in fact, favourably discussed the heredity of office as a remedy for what he considered to be a corrupted system of appointments in the Ottoman Empire.

³² See, for example, HHStA, Türkei I, box 45, bundle for 1581 Sept., fos. 199^r–206^v (Friedrich Preiner to Rudolf II, Constantinople, 30 Sept. 1581), at fo. 200^v; HHStA, Türkei I, box 63, bundle for first half of 1597 Sept., fos. 14^r–19^v, 33^r–34^r (Bartholomäus Pezzen to Rudolf II, Constantinople, 2 Sept. 1597), at fo. 15^r; Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 131.

³³ Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures*, 110. The symbolic and ideological dimensions of the Ottoman-Habsburg rivalry are discussed in Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 78–84, 103, 106–7; Gábor Ágoston, 'Information, Ideology, and Limits of Imperial Policy: Ottoman Grand Strategy in the Context of Ottoman-Habsburg Rivalry', in Virginia Aksan and Daniel Goffman (eds), *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), 94–102; Harriet Rudolph, 'Türkische Gesandtschaften ins Reich am Beginn der Neuzeit: Herrschaftsinszenierung, Fremdheitserfahrung und Erinnerungskultur', in Marlene Kurz et al. (eds), *Herrschaftsinszenierung, Fremdheitserfahrung und Erinnerungskultur: Akten des internationalen Kongresses zum 150-jährigen Bestehen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung, Wien, 22.–25. September 2004* (Vienna: Oldenbourg, 2005), 295–314; Gülrü Necipoğlu, 'Süleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power in the Context of Ottoman-Hapsburg-Papal Rivalry', *Art Bulletin*, 71 (1989), 401–27. For the location of the Imperial embassy, see Klaus Kreiser, *Istanbul: Ein historischer Stadtführer* (2nd edn, Munich: Beck, 2009), 95; Semavi Eyice, 'Elçi hanı', in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, 44 vols (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1988–2013), xi.15–18; Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures*, 49.



Map 3.1 Approximate location of the imperial embassy (*elçi han*) on a modern map of Istanbul in relation to major landmarks. The building no longer exists.
Map data © OpenStreetMap.org contributors.

All this time I have sought a way to enter the service of Your Great and Most Felicitous Majesty. It is for this reason that I gave up everything and became the Hungarian ambassador's steward so that I could do what I had long had in mind, namely to accept the Muslim faith and serve Your Great and Most Felicitous Majesty.³⁴

Mörth here invoked the stock trope of the long and challenging quest to reach his new faith but explicitly describes it first and foremost as a quest to enter the sultan's service. That the attraction of submitting to the sultan takes precedence over the attraction of submitting to God is revealing, even if the two clearly are treated as no more than opposite sides of the same coin. At the same time, the former steward emphasized the long history of his sympathies with Islam as if to contest the identification as a New Muslim as which he would doubtlessly have been entered into the Ottoman registers, even if the relevant documents seem not to have survived the passage of time.³⁵ Mitrovic, perhaps unwittingly, employed a rather similar pattern in the descriptions of Mörth as a villain without a moral compass and given to cruelty, disloyalty, and sensuality scattered throughout his memoirs. Apostatizing from the 'true faith' was merely in keeping with his nature; or, put slightly differently, given the negative stereotypes of the cruel and lustful 'Turk' so common in Christian Europe at the time, Mörth had already been inwardly 'Turkish' before he outwardly 'turned Turk'.³⁶

Regardless of whether the former steward's claim that he had planned to become an Ottoman Muslim long before joining the Imperial embassy is true, the rhetoric he employed is at least a tribute to the political and religious climate of his time. In fact, there are good reasons for regarding Ottoman Sunni Islam at least functionally as a rival confession, initially to Christianity as a whole but ultimately also the various branches of Latin Christianity which emerged in the wake of the Reformation. Christian theologians were clearly aware of the common elements in both religions, which is precisely why they frequently felt the need to reject as heresy rather than outright heathenism what, from a Christian perspective, appear as errors in Muhammad's teachings. Even from a Muslim point of view Islam is not so much a distinct monotheistic religion as a pure and pristine version of the earlier revelations provided to Jews and Christians which had been distorted and corrupted over time, without, however, ever fully losing all divine truth.³⁷ In the Muslim

³⁴ HHStA, Türkei I, box 81, bundle for 1593 July–Aug., fos. 210^r–^v and 214^r–^v ('Copi deren schriften'), at fo. 210^r.

³⁵ It is very likely that the gifts given to Mörth on the occasion of his conversion were recorded in the *Büyük Ruznamçe Defteri* (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, İstanbul, D.BRZ). Unfortunately, as Hedda Reindl-Kiel has generously informed me, the respective volume of the register contains a gap of several weeks which spans precisely the time of Mörth's change of sides.

³⁶ Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures*, 81–2, 109–13, 115–16.

³⁷ Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Edinburgh: EUP, 1958), chs 6 and 7, esp. pp. 184–8; Lucia Rostagno, *Mi faccio turco: Esperienze ed immagini dell'islam nell'Italia moderna* (*Oriente Moderno*, supplement no. 1; Studi e materiali sulla conoscenza dell'oriente in Italia, 4; Rome: Istituto per l'orienta C. A. Nallino, 1983), 5–6; Paula Sutter Fichtner, *Terror and Toleration: The Habsburg Empire Confronts Islam, 1526–1850* (London: Reaktion Books, 2008), 21–2; Nabil I. Matar, *Europe through Arab Eyes, 1578–1727* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 31–5; Yohanan Friedmann, *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam: Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition* (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), ch. 1; David Waines, *An Introduction to Islam* (2nd edn, Cambridge: CUP, 2003), 53–8;

understanding, therefore, those who followed the ‘religions of the book’ did not so much convert to Islam as perfect their faith, remembering the Primordial Covenant in which ‘all souls have recognized God in pre-eternity’.³⁸ In practice, Ladislaus Mörtz certainly approached Islam in a manner similar to that in which other European Christians approached Catholicism and Protestantism, not only when they appealed to the shared faiths of their rulers.

RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENTISM

While Mörtz employed recognizably confessionalizing rhetoric in his petition to Sultan Murad III, another testimony of his presents a very different, much more personal picture. In between the pages of the former steward’s *kisve bahası* petition, the archives in Vienna have preserved a short note, no more than half a folio in length, signed by ‘Lad. Marten. Ali Beg.’, that is, bearing both Mörtz’s Christian and Muslim names. Both documents are written in the same hand as the majority of the deciphered versions of Ambassador von Kreckwitz’s reports and must therefore be copies made by the chancery in Vienna. Addressed to a certain Hansel, the note appears to be a private letter written by the renegade shortly after his conversion. Here, no mention is made of loyalty to the sultan or a long-standing wish to serve him. Instead, Mörtz emphasized to Hansel that ‘it is because of you that I have stayed in this country so that I could—and will—avenge you’.³⁹

The wish to escape and avenge a perceived grievance is, of course, all but an uncommon motive for defection. The German Christoph von Roggendorf, for instance, threw in his lot with the Ottomans because he was disgruntled with Emperor Charles V after the latter had favoured Roggendorf’s wife in a legal dispute between the spouses. Likewise, an entire company of Walloon mercenaries garrisoned in the Hungarian fortress of Papa went over to the Ottomans in 1600, at the height of war between the sultan and the Holy Roman Emperor, because the Habsburgs had repeatedly failed to pay them.⁴⁰ In such situations, even joining the

Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 85–7, 93; Krstić, ‘Illuminated by the Light of Islam’, 46–7, 50; Felix Konrad, ‘From the “Turkish Menace” to Exoticism and Orientalism: Islam as Antithesis of Europe (1453–1914)?’, *European History Online* (Mainz: Leibniz Institute of European History, 14 Mar. 2011), par. 12, <<http://www.ieg-ego.eu/konradf-2010-en>>, accessed 18 Feb. 2016.

³⁸ Marcia Hermansen, ‘Conversion to Islam in Theological and Historical Perspectives’, in Lewis R. Rambo and Charles E. Farhadian (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 633; Karin van Nieuwkerk, ‘“Conversion” to Islam and the Construction of a Pious Self’, in Rambo and Farhadian (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*, 668–9; Marc David Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam: Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 3–4.

³⁹ HHStA, Türkei I, box 81, bundle for 1593 July–Aug., fo. 213^{r-v} (Ladislaus Marten [Mörtz] to Hansel, [Constantinople], n.d.), at fo. 213^r.

⁴⁰ Christine Isom-Verhaaren, ‘Shifting Identities: Foreign State Servants in France and the Ottoman Empire’, *Journal of Early Modern History*, 8 (2004), 130–3; Isom-Verhaaren, *Allies with the Infidel: The Ottoman and French Alliance in the Sixteenth Century* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011), 76–8; Caroline F. Finkel, ‘French Mercenaries in the Habsburg-Ottoman War of 1593–1606: The Desertion of the Papa Garrison to the Ottomans in 1600’, *Bulletin of SOAS*, 55 (1992), 451–71.

religious and ideological arch enemy evidently presented an acceptable option for seeking redress.

Clues to Hansel's identity and Mörth's reasons for seeking revenge are to be found in Friedrich Seidel's memoirs which provide the most detailed report of the events leading up to the steward's defection and conversion to Islam. Apparently, Mörth had entertained sexual relations with one of the embassy's kitchen boys. After Kreckwitz's servants had discovered this, the steward was confined to his chamber while his partner was put into chains and kept in a 'dark room'. According to Seidel, Mörth managed to escape to Galata and converted after having been arrested on the ambassador's orders once more by a group of janissaries.⁴¹ When the former steward returned some time later with other Ottoman officials to search the embassy for incriminating papers, he allegedly tried to liberate the kitchen boy from his dungeon. Yet Seidel points out, 'When the boy became aware of him, he rebuked him, calling him a rogue and a villain who had wickedly seduced and betrayed him, so that the traitor was forced to retreat without accomplishing what he had had in mind.'⁴² If this story is true, it is tempting to conclude that Hansel was Mörth's lover. This conclusion is further suggested by the significant correspondences between the letter and Seidel's account such as the addressee's imprisonment. The statement 'out of fear and weakness you professed and said things which are not true' in the letter may well be a reference to the kitchen boy's rebuke mentioned by the embassy's apothecary.⁴³ A familiar, even loving relationship between author and recipient is in any case suggested by the letter's warm tone.

No other source is as explicit as Seidel's memoirs, however. Although Mitrovic, too, accuses the steward of sodomy—a charge watered down to 'a capital crime' by Mitrovic's Victorian English translator—he does not mention the fate of Mörth's partner.⁴⁴ A report by Ambassador Kreckwitz dated 2 May 1593 suggests that he must have reported his steward's defection in an earlier letter but this seems to have been lost and may never have made it to Vienna.⁴⁵ Only in a letter dated 15 June 1593 does Kreckwitz discuss this episode at all. Like Seidel and Mitrovic, he explains that Mörth had 'publicly become a Turk . . . out of fear of the punishment which he had deserved because of his many misdeeds'. That the German text has 'bubenstück' would normally be significant. An old German word for knavery, it also designates a childish prank.⁴⁶ Yet on another level it may imply that whatever

⁴¹ Seidel, *Denckwürdige Gesandtschaft*, 11. ⁴² Seidel, *Denckwürdige Gesandtschaft*, 20.

⁴³ HHStA, Türkei I, box 81, bundle for 1593 July–Aug., fo. 213^{r-v} (Marten [Mörth] to Hansel), at fo. 213^r.

⁴⁴ Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Přibody*, 109. Compare Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Merkwürdige Gesandtschaftsreise*, 253–4, and contrast Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures*, 109. Surprisingly, Laura Lisy-Wagner, *Islam, Christianity and the Making of Czech Identity, 1453–1683* (Transculturalisms, 1400–1700; Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), in the discussion of Mörth's 'unnamed crime' on pp. 73–4, seems to have consulted only the English translation of Mitrovic's text.

⁴⁵ HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for 1593 May–June, fos. 2^r–8^v (Friedrich von Kreckwitz to Archduke Matthias, Constantinople, 2 May 1593), at fo. 5^v.

⁴⁶ HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for 1593 May–June, fos. 210^r–217^v ('Translation Herrn von Kreckwitz italienischen Schreibens an die Durchlaucht Ertzherzog Matthiasen, aus Constantinopel den 15 Junij anno 1593'), at fo. 210^{r-v}; Jacob and Wolfgang Grimm (eds), *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, 33 vols (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1854–1971), vol. ii, s.v. 'Bubenstück'.

deed it refers to involves a boy (German: *Bube*) and could thus be Kreckwitz's euphemism for pederasty. Alas, the German text is a translation of the ambassador's original Italian letter, which might itself have been a translation from German, possibly executed by a dragoman or one of the embassy's secretaries, so that any subtleties of this sort originally intended by the diplomat are likely to have been lost. Just as likely, Kreckwitz's silence on the matter may mean no more than that his steward's sexuality was of no interest to his superiors in Vienna, perhaps because his practices were not nearly as deviant as the accounts by Seidel and Mitrovic made them out to be.⁴⁷ In addition, the issue may have been regarded primarily as a domestic dispute which Kreckwitz handled in his private capacity as household head rather than in his official role as the Imperial ambassador so that there was no need to report it. The dispatch of 15 June does, however, note that, in addition to removing documents, the search party also took with them a boy 'whom I had employed to sweep the courtyard'.⁴⁸ Still, the text provides no indication of the reason for this action and it is impossible to say whether this boy is identical to the kitchen boy mentioned by Seidel.

It may be noted that at least among Christian-European observers there was a certain association between renegades and homosexuality, even if perhaps mainly for reasons of slander. Indeed, the 'Turks' were credited with any number of what were considered sexually deviant practices, chief among them 'sodomy' in the sense of intercourse between two men. Edward Barton, for example, reported the rumour that Cigalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa's wife had one of his eunuchs (an Englishman by birth) murdered because she suspected 'that [the] Admirall loved him better than her and used him instead of her', while Stephan Gerlach, in one of his letters, suggested that the German renegade Adam Neuser availed himself of male prostitutes in Istanbul.⁴⁹ Sexual stereotyping of this kind, however, became more prominent only gradually from the later sixteenth century onwards. Even though the murder of the third vezier and former *beylerbeyi* of Buda, the Italian-born Sinan Paşa, 'in his bedde' by 'two dutche yowthes turned Turkes' in 1589 may well have been related to his sexual attraction to his eventual killers, the diplomats who

⁴⁷ It is possible that the condemnation of Mörtz's sexual behaviour in the two travel narratives is an instance of a specifically Protestant rhetoric. See Walter G. Andrews and Mehmet Kalpaklı, *The Age of Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early-Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 128. On homosexuality in early modern Germany, see Helmut Puff, *Sodomy in Reformation Germany and Switzerland, 1400–1600* (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society; Chicago, IL: UCP, 2003). The caveats of anachronism concerning terms such as 'homosexuality' expressed in Andrews and Kalpaklı, *Age of Beloveds*, 24 apply without reservation. Compare also Lutz Berger, *Gesellschaft und Individuum in Damaskus 1550–1791* (Kultur, Recht und Politik in muslimischen Gesellschaften, 10; Würzburg: Ergon, 2007), 240–1 n. 126. I am grateful to Felix Konrad for bringing Berger's monograph to my attention.

⁴⁸ HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for 1593 May–June, fos. 210^r–217^v ('Translation Herrn von Kreckwitz italienischen Schreibens'), at fo. 210^v.

⁴⁹ TNA, SP 97/2, pt 2, fo. 223^r–^v (Edward Barton to Thomas Heneage, Constantinople, 21 Nov./5 Dec. 1593), at fo. 223^r; Christopher J. Burchill, *The Heidelberg Antitrinitarians: Johann Sylvan, Adam Neuser, Matthias Vebe, Jacob Suter, Johann Hasler* (Bibliotheca Dissidentium: Répertoire des non-conformistes religieux ses seizième et dix-septième siècles, 11; Baden-Baden: Koerner, 1989), 111, 119–20. Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, remains entirely silent on Neuser's sexual preferences.

reported the event remained silent on this possibility.⁵⁰ By the seventeenth century, in contrast, Christian-European commentators would have eagerly exploited such an opportunity to support their representation of the Ottoman elite as immoral and depraved. In fact, writers like Paul Rycaut emphasized homosexuality as characteristic traits of the Other, while generally remaining silent on homosexual practices at home.⁵¹

As a number of scholars have pointed out, however, in this period, sexual relations between men were part of a range of preferences and far from stigmatized in the way which they came to be in Christian Europe in later centuries or the Muslim Middle East from the nineteenth century onwards. In the Ottoman Empire, pederasty in particular was regarded as normal and in many ways tied to the male lifecycle. Condemnations of the practice did not generally revolve around whether or not such practices were natural—indeed, the naturalness of male–male attraction was generally accepted—but revolved around the questions of moderation and, in the debates between radical Sufis and orthodox Sunni theologians, the relationship between profane and divine love. Even in orthodox circles, beardless boys and adolescents (Turkish *emred*) were generally ‘considered sexually desirable (*müşteha*) and, in that regard, indistinguishable from women’. Ottoman sexual scripts considered boys prior to puberty to have an untamed sexuality which attracted them to women as well as men, while adult men would, in the course of what was considered their normal development, become exclusively attracted to women and younger males. Therefore, in Ze’evi’s words, ‘homoeerotic sex was understood as a transgenerational experience’. Mörtz’s relationship with the embassy’s kitchen boy would therefore not have been shocking to his now fellow Ottomans, since it conformed to precisely this model.⁵² Against this background, Barton’s

⁵⁰ Sinan Paşa seems to have been identical to the man named Payzen Yusuf Paşa by Peçevi. On his murder, see İbrahim Peçevi, *Peçevi tarihi*, ed. Murat Uraz, 2 vols (Istanbul: Son Telgraf Matbaası, 1968–9), ii.289; TNA SP 97/1, pt 2, fo. 184^{r-v} (Barton to Sir Francis Walsingham, Constantinople, 4/14 Oct. 1589), at fo. 184^r, quotations from here; fo. 186^{r-v} (Barton to Walsingham, Constantinople, 16/26 Oct. 1589), at fo. 186^r; fos. 188^r–189^v (Barton to Walsingham, Constantinople, 31 Oct./10 Nov. 1589), at fo. 188^r; HHStA, Türkei I, box 71, bundle for 1589 Sept.–Oct., fos. 120^r–121^v, 118^r–119^v (Pezzen to Archduke Ernst, Constantinople, 27 Oct. 1589), at fo. 120^r; Müller, *Prosopographie*, vi.352 misdates Sinan’s death by one year. Berger, *Gesellschaft*, 250 briefly discusses the case of a slave who had killed a Muslim man after the latter had made sexual advances to him.

⁵¹ Paul Rycaut, *The History of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire* (5th edn, London, 1682), 56–7, 60–2; Dror Ze’evi, *Producing Desire: Changing Sexual Discourse in the Ottoman Middle East, 1500–1900* (Studies on the History of Society and Culture; Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), ch. 6, esp. pp. 150–8; Andrews and Kalpaklı, *Age of Beloveds*, 9, 129–30. See also Winfried Schulze, *Reich und Türkengefahr im späten 16. Jahrhundert: Studien zu den politischen und gesellschaftlichen Auswirkungen einer äußeren Bedrohung* (Munich: Beck, 1978), 58–9; Daniel J. Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570–1630* (Early Modern Cultural Studies; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 86–90; Nabil I. Matar, *Turks, Moors and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), ch. 4, esp. pp. 112–16; Daniel, *Islam and the West*, ch. 5; Nancy Bisaha, *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 15.

⁵² Andrews and Kalpaklı, *Age of Beloveds*, esp. 17–18, first quotation from p. 63; Ze’evi, *Producing Desire*, esp. 23, 34–5, 82–3, 92–3, second quotation from p. 93; Everett K. Rowson, ‘The Categorization of Gender and Sexual Irregularity in Medieval Arabic Vice Lists’, in Julia Epstein (ed.), *Body Guards: Cultural Politics of Gender Ambiguity* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 57–62, 69–71;

reference to Cigalazade's alleged sexual conduct is noteworthy most of all for the absence of moral judgement. At its core, the story told by the diplomat is not so much one of sexual deviance, but of jealousy. In any case, the anecdote suggests that 'sodomy' was not as widely accepted in Ottoman society as early modern English authors, in particular, claimed.⁵³

If Mört's conversion to Islam had been prompted by a dispute with the Imperial ambassador over his sexuality and conduct, the quest for revenge mentioned in his letter to Hansel is evident in his behaviour after having left both the embassy and the Christian fold as reported by Mitrovic, Seidel, and Kreckwitz. The apothecary, for instance, recalled a shouting match between the steward and his former employer in which the first accused the ambassador, 'You, Kreckwitz! You have made me a Turk. You shall pay for it with your head!'⁵⁴ The ambassador's reports about the actions which the renegade took after having found several papers during that search indicate that the latter had every intention to make good on his threat. According to Kreckwitz, a fancifully embellished translation of those papers, in whose production the former steward seems to have been centrally involved, temporarily sent Murad III into such a rage that he ordered the diplomat's execution. Small wonder, then, that Kreckwitz referred to his former steward as his declared 'nemesis'.⁵⁵

Regardless of whether Mört's note was addressed to his lover or merely a friend, the letter provides a fascinating perspective on the former steward's take on religion. In a crucial passage, Mört invited Hansel to 'become a Turk' and reassuringly explained that 'God recognizes every man's heart'.⁵⁶ In the context of the confessional rivalries in Christian Europe during the sixteenth century, this statement invokes the distinctions drawn between outward conformance to religious practices and inward faith which the metaphors common at the time situated in the heart. This distinction was much more pronounced in early modern Christianity than Judaism and Islam, both of which put a premium on following the correct way of life. Similar terminology occurs, for example, in the Protestant literature on Nicodemism which deals with crypto-Protestantism in Catholic majority societies and, especially in the case of Elizabethan England, vice versa. Calvin passionately condemned such practices and Catholic theologians, too, frequently warned against

Leslie P. Peirce, 'Seniority, Sexuality, and Social Order: The Vocabulary of Gender in Early Modern Ottoman Society', in Madeline C. Zilfi (ed.), *Women in the Ottoman Empire: Middle Eastern Women in the Early Modern Era* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 10; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 174–5, 177–81; Nabil I. Matar, *Islam in Britain, 1558–1685* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), 114, 127; Berger, *Gesellschaft*, 242–6, 252–4.

⁵³ Compare Matar, *Turks, Moors and Englishmen*, 115–16, and the translation of Ahmad bin Qasim's refutation of the Christian-European idea that homosexuality was generally condoned in the Islamic world in appendix B of Matar's book; Berger, *Gesellschaft*, 248–52.

⁵⁴ Seidel, *Denckwürdige Gesandtschafft*, 19.

⁵⁵ HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for 1593 May–June, fos. 57^r–63^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 22 May 1593), at fo. 58^r; fos. 210^r–217^v ('Translation Herrn von Kreckwitz italienischen Schreibens'), at fo. 210^r–^v.

⁵⁶ HHStA, Türkei I, box 81, bundle for 1593 July–Aug., fo. 213^r–^v (Marten [Mört] to Hansel), at fo. 213^r.

religious dissimulation.⁵⁷ The former steward, in all probability, was aware that renegades who were tried before the Inquisition frequently explained that they had converted only outwardly while remaining Christians at heart.⁵⁸ Faced with a situation to which he saw no other solution than to convert to Islam, Mörtz may likewise have considered it excusable to dissimulate, simply going through the motions of being a 'Turk', as it were, while retaining his Catholic faith internally in the hope of eventually being reconciled to the church. Perhaps he also drew on the lessons of casuistry, and the method of mental reservation associated especially with Jesuit casuists like Tomás Sánchez, which he likely received during his brief stay at the Collegium Germanicum.⁵⁹

At the same time, by emphasizing internal belief over outward practice in this passage, Mörtz displays a certain religious pragmatism and flexibility which appear to have been frequent even—or perhaps rather especially—at the height of the 'age of confessionalization' in Christian Europe as well as the Ottoman Empire. Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, for instance, credited Süleyman the Magnificent's famous grand vizier Rüstem Paşa with the statement: 'I myself do not dissent from the doctrine that men who have passed this life in holiness and innocence will be partakers of eternal bliss, whatever religion they may have followed.'⁶⁰ In Rüstem's mind, adherence to the correct and true doctrine was evidently optional for salvation. For a famous example of an equally pragmatic approach to religious affiliation in Christian Europe one needs to turn only to the Dutch scholar Justus Lipsius (1547–1606) who converted from Catholicism to Calvinism and back again. In both cases considerations of career opportunities played a central role in religious conversion: Rüstem Paşa was a product of the *devşirme*, his conversion to Islam therefore the result of an institutionalized and specifically Ottoman career path, while Lipsius' conversions were connected to teaching opportunities at universities in the Spanish Netherlands and the United Provinces. In Lipsius' case, his nonchalance towards religious conversion arose out of his affinities for the teachings of the Family of Love, a Protestant sect which had grown out of anabaptism and stressed inner spiritualism while rejecting ritualistic observance as empty and meaningless, as well as his efforts to remain neutral in the political and religious struggles of the Dutch Revolt.⁶¹ Like Rüstem and Lipsius, Mörtz can be

⁵⁷ Perez Zagorin, *Ways of Lying: Dissimulation, Persecution, and Conformity in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), esp. chs 6 and 7; Lucetta Scaraffia, *Rinnegati: Per una storia dell'identità occidentale* (2nd edn, Rome: Editori Laterza, 2002), 186–7.

⁵⁸ Bartolomé and Lucile Bennassar, *Les Chrétiens d'Allah: L'Histoire extraordinaire des renégats, XVI^e et XVII^e siècles* (Paris: Perrin, 1989), 35–6, 48–56, 140–2; Rostagno, *Mi faccio turco*, 88–9, 90, 94.

⁵⁹ On the treatment of dissimulation in casuistry, see Zagorin, *Ways of Lying*, ch. 8.

⁶⁰ Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, *The Life and Letters of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, Seigneur de Bousbecque, Knight, Imperial Ambassador*, ed. and tr. Charles Thornton Forster and Francis Henry Blackburne Daniell, 2 vols (London: Paul, 1881), i.235.

⁶¹ Christine Woodhead, 'Rüstem Paşa', in *EP*, vol. viii (1995), p. 640; Martin Mulsow, 'Mehrfachkonversion, politische Religion und Opportunismus im 17. Jahrhundert: Ein Plädoyer für eine Indifferentismusforschung', in Kaspar von Greyerz et al. (eds), *Interkonfessionalität—Transkonfessionalität—binnenkonfessionelle Pluralität: Neue Forschungen zur Konfessionalisierungstheorie* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2003), 140–4; Zagorin, *Ways of Lying*, ch. 6, esp. pp. 117–19 and 122–5; Frauke Volland, 'Konfession, Konversion und soziales Drama: Ein Plädoyer für die

considered religiously indifferent. This does not mean, as present-day usage of the word *indifferent* misleadingly suggests, that these men did not care about religion and religious and confessional differences. But they did consider these paths as equally valid roads towards god and salvation.⁶²

As far as the Ottoman elite was concerned, a measure of indifferentism may have been rather common, provided the individuals in question outwardly adhered to Islam. Even though Busbecq went on to qualify Rüstem's religious views as 'not considered altogether orthodox', on the whole, the 'men of the sword' were deeply influenced by Sufi teachings which emphasize a mystical and deeply spiritual approach towards god.⁶³ In fact, unlike its Christian-European counterparts, the Ottoman state remained relatively unperturbed by heterodoxy, crypto-Christianity, and crypto-Judaism provided these did not challenge Ottoman rule and the predominance of Ottoman Sunni Islam. Otherwise retribution was often relentless, for instance when religious figures proclaimed themselves to be the redeemer (Mahdi), whose coming on the eve of the Day of Judgement is announced in prophetic *hadith*, and put themselves at the head of local rebellions.⁶⁴ Such relative leniency towards religious deviance flowed from the confidence of knowing that Islam was God's final revelation and that those who remained attached to their old faiths even after conversion to Islam, sooner or later, 'would become Muslims anyway'.⁶⁵

Although religious indifferentism and religious dissimulation appear to be not only incompatible but diametrically opposed to processes of religious polarization, and in particular to confessionalization as the concept has been applied to the history of Europe, the two are, in fact, intimately linked.⁶⁶ On the surface, as Martin Mulsow has highlighted, 'indifferentism is the negation, the denial of everything which confessionalization efforts sought to achieve'.⁶⁷ This is correct especially in so far as confessionalizing rulers and clerics sought to impose uniformity of belief on the population in a given territory. In these settings, as the example

Ablösung des Paradigmas der "konfessionellen Identität", in Greyerz et al. (eds), *Interkonfessionalität*, 91–104.

⁶² Nicole Grochowina, 'Grenzen der Konfessionalisierung: Dissidententum und konfessionelle Indifferenz im Ostfriesland des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts', in Greyerz et al. (eds), *Interkonfessionalität*, 58; Mulsow, 'Mehrfachkonversion', 132–3; Zagorin, *Ways of Lying*, 122–3.

⁶³ Busbecq, *Life and Letters*, i.235; Madeline C. Zilfi, *The Politics of Piety: The Ottoman Ulema in the Postclassical Age (1600–1800)* (Minneapolis, MN: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1988), 34–9.

⁶⁴ Markus Koller, 'Verfolgungen von Häretikern im Osmanischen Reich—der Sultan als Verteidiger des sunnitischen Islam (15.–16. Jahrhundert)', in Eckhard Leuschner and Thomas Wünsch (eds), *Das Bild des Feindes: Konstruktion von Antagonismen und Kulturtransfer im Zeitalter der Türkenkriege; Ostmitteleuropa, Italien und Osmanisches Reich* (Berlin: Mann, 2013), 267–82; Gilles Veinstein, 'Religious Institutions, Policies and Lives', in Suraiya N. Faroqhi and Kate Fleet (eds), *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, ii: *The Ottoman Empire as a World Power, 1453–1603* (Cambridge: CUP, 2013), 321–2, 339–47; Zilfi, *Politics of Piety*, 34, 39; TNA, SP 97/3, fos. 210^v–212^v (Barton to Robert Cecil, Constantinople, 15/25 Sept. 1597), at fos. 210^v–211^r.

⁶⁵ Maurus Reinkowski, 'Hidden Believers, Hidden Apostates: The Phenomenon of Crypto-Jews and Crypto-Christians in the Middle East', in Dennis C. Washburn and A. Kevin Reinhart (eds), *Converting Cultures: Religion, Ideology and Transformations of Modernity* (Social Sciences in Asia, 14; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 418–19, 427.

⁶⁶ Zagorin, *Ways of Lying* is predicated on this link.

⁶⁷ Mulsow, 'Mehrfachkonversion', 134.

of north-western Germany studied by Nicole Grochowina demonstrates, religious indifference provided resistance to such attempts to the extent of a consciously deployed strategy.⁶⁸ Yet the two basic outlooks were not entirely incompatible in practice. While confessionalization did spark resistance, it also positively promoted an essentially conformist indifferentism to what Robert L. Montgomery has called the 'monopolistic faith'.⁶⁹ This is particularly apparent in environments in which access to certain resources such as appointments in state service was restricted to members of a given religious group. Although implying a weakening of religious commitment, indifferentism in such circumstances paradoxically served the politically motivated desire to establish homogeneity of religious affiliation. To be sure, the adherence of men like Rüstem Paşa, Justus Lipsius, and even Ladislaus Mörtz to any one religion or confession may have been doctrinally superficial, but the mere fact of their conversion and outward membership in the dominant religious group served to confirm the dominance of that group and endowed it with further legitimacy. Conversion thus also served to symbolically communicate power.⁷⁰ Of course, religious indifference also had practical advantages for those of a more opportunistic streak of mind. If God recognizes every man's heart, it becomes theoretically easy to simply accept religious power relations and deal with them pragmatically without having to fear for one's soul.

In his *kisve bahası* petition, Ladislaus Mörtz clearly evoked the symbolic value of conversion and specifically the rewards given to converts which, he argued, would send a powerful and appealing message to other potential converts. That the steward himself was not a fervent Muslim matters less in this context than the fact that he appealed to the sultan using the vocabulary of confessionalization in which religious and political polarization go hand in glove. The appearances thus created strengthened both the prestige of the Ottoman ruler and of the faith as whose protector he understood himself. At this stage, practice and observable behaviour were more important than the internalization of the values and principles as whose expressions they were read.

ORTHODOXY, ORTHOPRAXY, AND THE ISSUE OF SINCERITY

In the context of the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Ottoman Empire, practice was indeed key, even in matters which, strictly speaking, were between the individual and God. Chapter 2 discusses, among other cases, the conversion of the Cretan Niccolo de Bello. In Mitrovic's description, Bello initially communicated his wish by tearing up his hat and collar while drinking in the company of a group of janissaries. The latter then dressed him in a turban, thus

⁶⁸ Grochowina, 'Grenzen der Konfessionalisierung'.

⁶⁹ Robert L. Montgomery, 'Conversion and the Historic Spread of Religions', in Rambo and Farhadian (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*, 169.

⁷⁰ Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam*, 250; Krstić, 'Illuminated by the Light of Islam', 40.

symbolically transforming him from a Christian into a Muslim.⁷¹ Even though Mitrovic presents Bello's conversion as a voluntary act, other cases suggest that the change of faith may in fact have been less than intentional.

Orthodox Christian neomartyrologies, for instance, generally concern instances of inadvertent conversion. Contrary to expectations of social segregation engendered not least by the *millet* system and its legal relevance, the corresponding stories, as Tijana Krstić has remarked, depict 'a closely intertwined space in which Christians have Muslim friends, customers, and apprentices'.⁷² One such account from the late seventeenth century concerns the celebration of a Greek Orthodox festival in Istanbul in which not only Christians but also Muslims, former Orthodox Christians who had embraced Islam, took part. During the celebration, some of these participants swapped headgear so that 'Orthodox Christians put on Muslim hats, while Muslims put on Christian hats'. What the Greek Orthodox participants evidently regarded as a mere expression of joy was seen by some of their Muslim friends as a religious statement in line with the importance of dressing according to one's religious affiliation discussed in Chapter 2. In their eyes, donning the headgear reserved for Muslims constituted conversion. Consequently, when the next day these Muslims encountered one Greek Orthodox participant, a goldsmith named Angeles, wearing his Christian hat, they brought him before the *kadı* (judge) and accused him of having apostatized from Islam. Since Angeles denied having converted to Islam in the first place, the *kadı* soon forwarded the case to the grand vizier, Kara Mustafa Paşa. Needless to say, Angeles was swayed by neither promises nor threats to revoke his denial and embrace Islam. Eventually, he was beheaded.⁷³

Similarly, relying on the evidence of the Scottish traveller William Lithgow, Nabil Matar has suggested that 'some conversions resulted from slips of the tongue' when a Christian unwittingly repeated the *shahāda*, the Islamic confession of faith, while in the presence of Muslims who 'would promptly consider him converted'.⁷⁴ Matar's conclusion is further supported by the evidence provided in the stories of neomartyrs such as Nicholas 'the Grocer from Karpenesi' who was executed in 1672. Nicholas, a teenager, received tuition in Turkish from a Muslim neighbour who was impressed with the boy's intellect and ability to learn. As the story goes, this neighbour requested Nicholas to read out 'an announcement in Turkish which included the Muslim declaration of faith'. When the boy did so, he 'was immediately informed that he had just declared himself to be a Muslim'.⁷⁵ Testimonies in

⁷¹ Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures*, 10–11.

⁷² Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 146.

⁷³ Nomikos Michael Vaporis, *Witnesses for Christ: Orthodox Christian Neomartyrs of the Ottoman Period, 1437–1860* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2000), 130–3, quotation from p. 130. The case is also discussed in Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 149–50.

⁷⁴ Nabil I. Matar, '“Turning Turk”: Conversion to Islam in English Renaissance Thought', *Durham University Journal*, 86 (1994), 36; Matar, *Islam in Britain*, 30; William Lithgow, *A Most Delectable, and True Discourse, of an Admired and Painefull Peregrination from Scotland, to the Most Famous Kingdomes in Europe, Asia and Affricke* (London, 1614), sig. K^r.

⁷⁵ Vaporis, *Witnesses for Christ*, 123–6, quotations from p. 123.

front of Inquisition tribunals likewise suggest that, in many cases, those who embraced Islam did not know the meaning of the sentence they were required to utter in Arabic, a language which few of them would have known well enough. One Christian-turned-Muslim reconciled to the Catholic Church in 1627, for instance, claimed during his interrogation that, when he asked what the phrase meant, nobody was able to tell him except for one renegade who said it was the equivalent of Hallelujah.⁷⁶

Drawing on the legal opinions issued by the Empire's highest religious and legal authorities, the *şeyhülislams*, Tijana Krstić has been able to further substantiate the impression that involuntary conversions increasingly came to be considered valid, provided they had assumed the correct form. At least in principle, therefore,

conversion to Islam while drunk, conversion to Islam by pronouncing the *shahada* without understanding its meaning (being tricked into it), and conversion to Islam under threat were all considered valid in the eyes of Ottoman jurists, especially from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

In Krstić's view, the increasing disregard for the actual circumstances of conversion and the greater willingness of *şeyhülislams* to accept conversions by force or trickery as valid 'testify to the evolution and progressive radicalization of initiatives toward social disciplining and confessionalization in the Ottoman Empire and their impact on legal practice'.⁷⁷

What is remarkable in the Ottoman case, as Krstić points out, is that this process of confessionalization and social disciplining often appears to have emanated from below rather than having been driven by the Ottoman state and its agents. In the majority of neomartyrologies *kadis* and muftis appear reluctant to prescribe and enforce the death penalty to inadvertent converts, but are usually pressured into doing so by 'the enraged, conversion-or-death-disposed Muslim crowd'. For all their use of stereotypical roles, these stories are inherently plausible, conforming to what we know about *kadis* and their position in the administration and local Ottoman society as well as legal proceedings in local courts.⁷⁸ Of particular relevance is the premium which Islamic law puts on the testimony of witnesses—and Muslim witnesses at that—which may have made it rather difficult, if not impossible, for the inadvertent convert to convince the *kadi* of his true intention or, rather, the lack of it.⁷⁹ In this sense, of course, justice was negotiated between various parties—in this case the alleged convert, the community, and the state—a fact which neomartyrologies seem to reflect accurately, but also one which

⁷⁶ Rostagno, *Mi faccio turco*, 63.

⁷⁷ Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 150–1.

⁷⁸ Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 151–3, quotation from p. 152.

⁷⁹ On the importance of intent in Islamic law, see Joseph Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (2nd edn, Oxford: OUP, 1966), 116–18. The importance of witnesses features in nearly all parts of Schacht's work. For a concrete example of the precedence which the testimony of witnesses takes over written evidence, see for example the court proceedings discussed in Joshua Michael White, 'Catch and Release: Piracy, Slavery, and Law in the Early Modern Ottoman Mediterranean', PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 2012, ch. 5. Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 152 also comments on the 'strategic deployment of testimonies' presented in neomartyrologies.

was hardly peculiar to the Ottoman legal system.⁸⁰ Still, stories of martyrs in themselves, like the testimony of a single Christian-European traveller, are less than perfect sources for the actual treatment of inadvertent converts (and thus alleged apostates) in court. Further research which includes Ottoman court records themselves will hopefully shed more light on this complex issue. It is quite possible that, by understandably focusing on the law of apostasy, neomartyrologies involving cases of Christians wearing the 'wrong' headdress may put an undue emphasis on the agency of the local Muslim population in enforcing religious discipline.

Even from a purely legalistic point of view, a change of headgear, as in the cases of Bello and Angeles, was not purely an issue of religious conversion, but also touched upon the Empire's sumptuary laws which were designed to ensure that the sultan's subjects wore the dress appropriate for their station and religious affiliation. At least for the period under discussion in this book, it needs to be borne in mind that Ebussuud Efendi had not considered the wearing of the white turban as sufficient for establishing a person's adherence to Islam. His *fatwa* (legal opinion, Arabic: *fatwā*, pl. *fatāwā*) on this matter clearly indicates that a verbal affirmation was required, even if the latter was no more than a simple 'yes' when the individual in question was asked whether he or she was a Muslim. This is in stark contrast to Ebussuud's ruling that Muslims were to be treated as apostates simply for wearing Christian hats.⁸¹ Perhaps such generosity towards the sultan's non-Muslim subjects (Turkish: *zimmi*, Arabic: *dhimmi*) stemmed from a sense of duty to protect them. In this context it is noteworthy that the proceedings against the goldsmith Angeles progressed not on the basis of his wearing a white turban alone, but crucially included the charge that he had pronounced the *shahāda*.⁸²

In most cases, of course, the difference between being tried for apostasy or violation of sumptuary law would have been minute in practice. In fact, the non-Muslim discovered wearing a white turban found himself in a dilemma: if he admitted to being a non-Muslim, he admitted his guilt of having violated Ottoman sumptuary law. Punishment for this offence could be severe. A sultanic command (*ferman*) of 1577, for instance, proclaimed that those 'who wear dress contrary to this noble command are marked out for execution; let their possessions be impounded and confiscated.'⁸³ To avoid this, the accused might declare himself a

⁸⁰ Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 153. The negotiated character of Ottoman justice also clearly emerges from the research of my colleague Christian Roth on the use of shari'a courts by non-Muslims in the eighteenth-century Aegean. Unfortunately, Christian Roth, 'Aspects of Juridical Integration of Non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire: Observations in the Eighteenth-Century Urban and Rural Aegean', in Pascal W. Firges et al. (eds), *Well-Connected Domains: Towards an Entangled Ottoman History* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 57; Leiden: Brill 2014), ch. 9 engages with this aspect only in passing. For similar processes of negotiations in reaching not only verdicts, but in defining legal categories themselves, see Gauri Parasher, 'Between Saree and Skirt: Legal Transculturality in Eighteenth-Century Pondicherry', in Christina Brauner and Antje Flüchter (eds), 'The Dimensions of Transcultural Statehood', special issue, *Comparativ*, 24/5 (2014), 56–77.

⁸¹ Betül İpşirli Argit, 'Clothing Habits, Regulations and Non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire', *Akademik Araştırmalar Dergisi/Journal of Academic Studies*, 6/24 (2005), 90.

⁸² Vaporis, *Witnesses for Christ*, 130–3.

⁸³ Ahmed Refik (ed.), *Onuncu Asr-ı Hicri'de İstanbul Hayatı (1495–1591)* (Istanbul: Enderun Kitabevi, 1988), no. 13, p. 51. As translated in Matthew Elliot, 'Dress Codes in the Ottoman Empire:

Muslim in which case a later retraction and return to his original faith would single him out as an apostate who was likewise liable to the death penalty.⁸⁴ While it was admittedly nearly impossible to rigorously and strictly enforce dress regulations for purely pragmatic reasons, embracing the reality postulated by donning 'Muslim' headgear and living (at least outwardly) as a Muslim, most likely presented the easiest solution when facing prosecution. However, even in the context of enforcing sumptuary law the initial impetus for prosecution may often have stemmed from 'civilians' rather than the Ottoman authorities themselves. In the story of Theophilus the Sailor, another seventeenth-century neomartyr, the death sentence ultimately rested on the accusation of having worn Muslim headdress brought to the *kadi* by the Muslim captain who had employed Theophilus at the time.⁸⁵

These legal conundrums illuminate an important difference in the approach towards the respective faiths of Ottomans and European Christians which has an important bearing for how each understood the process of conversion to the respective religion. By the later sixteenth century, as a result of the Protestant and Catholic Reformations, European Christians, or at least the increasingly intellectually well-trained clergy, had become ever more concerned with what individuals actually believed and thus laboured to ensure to the best of their abilities that their flock internalized the officially approved doctrines to reject all other ideas as heresy. These attempts were embodied in new techniques and institutions such as catechesis, church visitations, and the infamous Inquisition. To be sure, what people actually did continued to matter. Their actions, sometimes only the possession of certain objects such as Hebrew prints and manuscripts, frequently brought them to the attention of religious authorities. These then continued to inquire not only into the actions of potential deviants but sought to discover the actual contents of their belief. The primary concern was the establishment and protection of orthodoxy.⁸⁶

This obsession with correct belief frequently, if not universally, permeated Christian conceptions of conversion to Christianity which increasingly became a precise moment marked by the sacrament of baptism. It had, ideally, been preceded by thorough instruction in the fundamental beliefs, doctrines, and rites of Christianity, providing the would-be converts with ample opportunity to familiarize themselves with the Christian way of life and affording them the opportunity to practise it before things became serious. Take the example of Yang Tingyun, one of the so-called 'Three Pillars of Chinese Catholicism'. He met Matteo Ricci, the

The Case of the Franks', in Suraiya N. Faroqhi and Christoph K. Neumann (eds), *Ottoman Costumes: From Textile to Identity* (Istanbul: Eren, 2004), 107.

⁸⁴ Elliot, 'Dress Codes', 107.

⁸⁵ Vaporis, *Witnesses for Christ*, 106–7. On the enforcement of sumptuary law see Madeline C. Zilfi, 'Whose Laws? Gendering the Ottoman Sumptuary Regime', in Faroqhi and Neumann (eds), *Ottoman Costumes*, 139.

⁸⁶ Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard Wiegers, *A Man of Three Worlds: Samuel Pallache, a Moroccan Jew in Catholic and Protestant Europe*, tr. Martin Beagles (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 19; Christopher F. Black, *The Italian Inquisition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 177–81. The most classical exposition of this preoccupation with the actual content of belief is, of course, Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, tr. John and Anne Tedeschi (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980).

founder of the Jesuit mission in China, in 1600 but in spite of his interest in the Jesuits' teachings, Yang did not formally convert and receive baptism until more than a decade later. The historian Nicholas Standaert has noted 'the rather long period of discussion that preceded Yang Tingyun's baptism. It was neither a sudden nor a quick conversion. There seems to have been no pressure from the missionaries to hasten his baptism.'⁸⁷ The ritual of conversion, consequently, was the *endpoint* of what sociologists rightly regard as a drawn-out process.⁸⁸ This pattern, moreover, was not exclusive to the Christian missions overseas. In Venice, the Pia Casa dei Catecumeni was the central institution for instructing potential converts to Christianity in the fundamentals of the faith. Its regulations required that those admitted to it spent at least eight months in receiving catechetical instruction in order to ensure the sincerity of their intentions.⁸⁹

In Islam, in contrast, and particularly in the early modern Ottoman Empire, ritual conversion did not mark the end but the *beginning* of the convert's journey to Islam. As Krstić, building on the research of Richard Bulliet and Giovanna Calasso, explains,

the verb *aslama* (Ar. 'to surrender'), which is used to signal acceptance of Islam in the Arabic sources, can be interpreted as 'to enter Islam' and that this 'entrance' is only the departure point for becoming Muslim over a period of time through participation in the rituals and social life of the Muslim community.⁹⁰

Unlike in contemporary European Christianity, correct belief was not so much acquired through indoctrination as through lived experience and the imitation of one's fellow believers. For this reason, conversion in most cases was a drawn-out process of acculturation which, of necessity, allowed for a great deal of hybridity. This is precisely why the Ottoman state could remain relatively unperturbed by crypto-Christians and crypto-Jews, as Maurus Reinkowski has pointed out, while early modern Christian-European states and their churches felt so threatened by such stances that they instituted elaborate institutions of surveillance and frequently responded by expelling those whose very existence seemed to challenge Christianity's hegemony from their territories.⁹¹

⁸⁷ Nicolas Standaert, *Yang Tingyun, Confucian and Christian in Late Ming China: His Life and Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 53–5.

⁸⁸ This has been extensively sketched, for instance, in the case of the Jesuit mission in China. See Nicolas Standaert (ed.), *Handbook of Christianity in China* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 405–11, which makes ample, if somewhat schematic use of the model of conversion developed by Lewis R. Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993).

⁸⁹ E. Natalie Rothman, 'Becoming Venetian: Conversion and Transformation in the Seventeenth Century Mediterranean', *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 11 (2006), 39–75; Rothman, *Brokering Empire: Trans-Imperial Subjects between Venice and Istanbul* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), 129–30, esp. n. 23.

⁹⁰ Krstić, 'Illuminated by the Light of Islam', 44–5; Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 101–2. Here, Krstić refers to Richard Bulliet, *Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period: An Essay in Quantitative History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), ch. 4, esp. p. 33, and Giovanna Calasso, 'Récits de conversions, zèle dévotionnel et instruction religieuse dans les biographies des "gens de Basra" du Kitab al-Tabaqat d' Ibn Sa'd', in Mercedes García-Arenal (ed.), *Conversion islamiques: Identités religieuses en Islam méditerranéen* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 2002), 19–48.

⁹¹ Marc David Baer, 'History and Religious Conversion', in Rambo and Farhadian (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*, ch. 1, esp. pp. 25–32; Reinkowski, 'Hidden Believers', 419,

This is not to say that the Ottomans were indifferent to what Ottoman Muslims did or were immune to the impulse of homogenizing the community of the faithful. On the contrary, by taking drastic action against apostates, whether actual or suspected, conscious or involuntary, and by punishing deviant behaviour regarded as threatening to the social and political order, Ottoman authorities and, perhaps just as frequently, certain sections of the Ottoman Sunni community sought to establish and maintain a measure of religious uniformity.⁹² That these attempts were not limited to religious doctrines and practices in a narrow, ritualistic sense is precisely the result of a view of society in which each individual's place, including their religious affiliation, is determined by how they behave, including how they dress.⁹³

For outside observers trained to focus on the internalization of religious doctrines, the conversions which produced renegades could not but seem pragmatic, opportunistic, and insincere in the majority of instances. After all, formal conversion took place *before* indoctrination and the latter would in most cases have been a much lengthier process of learning by doing rather than formalized instruction. This may have changed in the later seventeenth century when Mehmed IV's 'Statute of the New Muslim' stipulated that catechesis should be provided immediately to those who wished to embrace Islam in front of the imperial council (*divan-i hümayun*), but even this text remains unclear about whether such instruction preceded or followed the declaration of the *shahāda*. It was, however, to take place before circumcision. Consequently, it was—and still is—easy to conclude that those who embraced Islam did so not out of conviction or concern for his or her soul, but for ulterior reasons such as admission to the Ottoman elite and a regular income. For this reason, Marc Baer, in emphasizing that conversion has an internal as well as an external component which are not separate but complementary, makes an important methodological point. Indeed, understanding conversion to Islam is significantly hampered by the models of conversion established in the sociology of religion which in Krstić's words, conceptualize it as 'a dramatic event or process that can be isolated and narrated in the manner of Saint Paul or Saint Augustine'. Because these models have emerged from studies of conversion to various branches of Christianity during and after the sixteenth-century Reformations, they share the expectation that the formal act of conversion represents the final steps in converts' admissions as new members into the respective group of

427; Claire Norton, 'Conversion to Islam in the Ottoman Empire', *Wiener Zeitschrift zur Geschichte der Neuzeit*, 7 (2007), 24.

⁹² Veinstein, 'Religious Institutions', 338–47; Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, esp. pp. 14, 92–7; Koller, 'Verfolgungen von Häretikern'; Markus Dressler, 'Inventing Orthodoxy: Competing Claims for Authority and Legitimacy in the Ottoman-Safavid Conflict', in Hakan T. Karateke and Maurus Reinkowski (eds), *Legitimizing the Order: The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 34; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 151–73; Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam*, pp. 7–8, chs 3 and 5; Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: CUP, 2008), ch. 5.

⁹³ Suraiya N. Faroqhi, 'Ottoman Costumes: From Textile to Identity', in Faroqhi and Neumann (eds), *Ottoman Costumes*, 15–48; Zilfi, 'Whose Laws?', 133–7; Reinkowski, 'Hidden Believers', 418.

fellow believers, that is, *after* the converts have already demonstrated their familiarity with the new faith.⁹⁴

The question to what extent individual converts were actually convinced of Islam's truth in the moment of conversion is certainly legitimate. A definitive answer would indeed be of some interest because this would tell us much about the extent of the actual spiritual and theological challenge which Ottoman Sunni Islam posed to European Christianities and the powers of attraction of its claim to divine truth. But how are we to determine whether renegades underwent a change of heart rather than merely a change of hat? The mere attempt of assessing the sincerity of conversion, moreover, is fraught with the danger of artificially simplifying historical realities and presenting clear-cut distinctions which were more fluid in the eyes of contemporaries. On the most basic level, such an attempt is liable to privileging, say, the viewpoints of external agents of conversions (e.g. missionaries in a Christian context) over those of converts themselves (or vice versa) at the expense of recognizing that conversion—not least as a statement of belonging to a given community of believers—is always potentially contested between a variety of parties. At the same time, the need to give a definitive answer in many cases provides the strong temptation of presenting a static view which downplays the ways in which even an individual convert's assessment of his or her own sincerity dynamically developed over time.⁹⁵

This latter point is vividly demonstrated by Ladislaus Mörth's story. Even though the amount of documentation available on the former steward of the Imperial embassy makes his case one of the most interesting within my sample, his conversion remains ambivalent. If the different interpretations afforded by the various documents are at all reconcilable into one coherent 'truth', it would seem that the former steward underwent not one, but several changes of heart which can be linked to specific stages of his experience following his decision to escape the *elçi han* and announce his conversion to Islam. One also needs to bear in mind that, even when his own testimony is recorded, the respective audiences are key to the stories told there. It should not surprise us, therefore, that Mörth claimed a long-standing wish when communicating to the sultan and yet expressed his 'real sorrow for having left the true faith' when he requested Bailo Matteo Zane's help in returning to Christendom a few months later.⁹⁶ Nevertheless, his ambivalence may have been genuine. He simply may have had mixed feelings about his 'turning Turk' and that is why he attempted to reassure not only Hansel but perhaps also himself that 'God recognizes every man's heart', regardless of the creed he

⁹⁴ Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam*, 13–16, 191; Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 102, quotation from this page. For an up-to-date overview of the formative literature of conversion studies, see Lewis R. Rambo and Charles E. Farhadian, 'Introduction', in Rambo and Farhadian (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*, 4–9.

⁹⁵ Compare Rothman, 'Becoming Venetian', 40; Allan Greer, 'Conversion and Identity: Iroquois Christianity in Seventeenth-Century New France', in Kenneth Mills and Anthony Grafton (eds), *Conversion: Old Worlds and New* (Studies in Comparative History; Rochester, NY: URP, 2003), 176–8.

⁹⁶ *CSP Venice*, ix.96–7, no. 197 (Zane to Doge and Senate, Constantinople, 2 Aug. 1593), at p. 97.

professed. There is no one final and conclusive answer. Mörtz may have left many clues about his inner state but certainly we have no way of looking into his soul. His true reasons for conversion to Islam and becoming an Ottoman are, in effect, not secrets but mysteries.

This, in fact, is the real problem when trying to determine whether religious conversion was spiritually sincere or merely instrumental. How can we tell? For all we know, most renegades do not seem to have left any clues as to their motivations and beliefs, even if accounts hidden away in *mecmû'as* (personal miscellanies) still await their discovery. In the introduction to this book, I have already pointed out that one of the major obstacles in this study has been the fact that individuals were in most cases only mentioned in passing, providing too little information to search for traces of their lives in other sources. And even where we are lucky enough to have access to a relative wealth of information, it is often not conclusive but instead supports multiple interpretations. Certain factors—such as steep monetary rewards—may seem to support one interpretation rather than another, but they are hardly conclusive proof.

This latter point is important because it includes a more general caveat about the difficulty of establishing causality in an immensely complex world. If Bulliet's famous 'second axiom of conversion, which states that leaving aside ecstatic converts, no one willingly converts from one religion to another if by virtue of conversion he markedly lowers his social status' appears self-evident to most historians today, then primarily because, by and large, we are children of our time and the axiom chimes well with the ideas which most of us share about 'human nature' and the predominance of rational choices.⁹⁷ I do not mean to reject Bulliet's idea, of course, since it allows for greater complexity than Minkov's somewhat simplistic argument about the importance of gaining material benefits and social advancement, for example, would suggest.⁹⁸ After all, which is the group that confers status? On a purely theoretical level, conversion may vastly enhance an individual's status, for example by conferring a reputation for devoutness, within a small minority while at the same time rendering him or her an outcast in the majority society of which this community is part.⁹⁹

Consequently, I would like to counsel caution. Can we really claim that someone converted to Islam out of a desire for material and social advancement, merely because he ended up with an income of 40 *akçe* and some thirty years down the line became grand vizier? Nor are the rewards requested through *kisve bahası* petitions conclusive indicators that conversion had been motivated by obtaining such rewards in the first place, as Minkov argues.¹⁰⁰ Do we really believe that only

⁹⁷ Bulliet, *Conversion*, 40. How poorly the rational choice model describes actual processes of decision making becomes clear from the overview of the state of neuropsychology provided by Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2011).

⁹⁸ Minkov, *Conversion*, 92–101.

⁹⁹ On the tension between admission to the community of believers of the new faith and the rejection by former relations, see also Nieuwkerk, "Conversion" to Islam', 677–9; Rambo and Farhadian, 'Introduction', 4.

¹⁰⁰ Minkov, *Conversion*, 192.

those who did not request something which was customarily granted by the Ottoman state to others in similar situations were sincere converts? This is tantamount to claiming that people living in the present-day UK or Germany only have children in order to claim child benefit, a monthly payment given to parents on a per-child basis.

I do not deny that many of the renegades discussed in this book were probably opportunists—I frankly admit that I firmly believe that human beings (indeed arguably all forms of life) are inherently opportunistic creatures—but even financial rewards may often have been just that, welcome rewards but *not* incentives. Unless there is strong evidence, constructing an argument on the basis of such coincidences (in the literal sense) betrays the historian's cynicism.¹⁰¹ Moreover, appearances can be deceiving and historians are no less likely to misunderstand historical actors than their contemporaries were. The following passage from Minkov's study, for example, tells his readers at least as much, if not more, about his own assumptions as about the converts he studied:

Some petitioners attempted to disguise the worldly reasons underlying their decision to convert by stating in their petitions that the idea first occurred in a dream. . . . Although the imaginary nature of this dream is apparent to modern readers, for the superstitious minds of the eighteenth century it may have sounded like an incredible revelation.¹⁰²

While his conclusion might perhaps indeed be accurate for most of the petitions he examined, the lack of sympathy for historical actors and their world view—summarily dismissed as 'superstitious'—is striking. Most inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire regardless of their creed commonly regarded dreams as legitimate sources of knowledge which provided guidance in waking life, occasionally because they were considered divine messages. We should at least entertain the *possibility* that these petitioners genuinely believed what to us sounds like mumbo-jumbo and thinly veiled self-interest.¹⁰³

Perhaps then, as students of the past, we might do well to take a page from the Ottomans' book and concentrate on what historical actors actually did as well as how their actions were perceived by themselves and others. If there are multiple, conflicting interpretations, they deserve our attention for they may tell us infinitely more about the periods we are interested in than any attempts to resolve inconsistencies, contradictions, and ambivalences.

¹⁰¹ See, for example, Halil İnalcık, 'The Ottoman State: Economy and Society, 1300–1600', in İnalcık and Donald Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, 2 vols (pbk edn, Cambridge: CUP, 1997), i.69. Minkov, *Conversion* is more ambivalent, being careful about economic explanations on pp. 10–13 and 92–7 but accepting others on pp. 182–3. See also the reservations voiced in Norton, 'Conversion', 31–2.

¹⁰² Minkov, *Conversion*, 191. Contrast Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 71.

¹⁰³ Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam*, 188–9; Özgen Felek, 'Re-Creating Image and Identity: Dreams and Visions as a Means of Murād III's Self-Fashioning', PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 2010, esp. 3–11; Felek and Alexander D. Knysh (eds), *Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2012); Ze'evi, *Producing Desire*, 99–108. On dreams in the study of religious conversion, see also Kelly Bulkeley, 'Dreaming and Religious Conversion', in Rambo and Farhadian (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*, ch. 11, here esp. pp. 267–8.

CONCLUSION

Even though renegades' conversions to Islam cannot be generally dismissed as by definition instrumental, these acts undeniably carried with them a range of socio-political and material consequences. The one most central to the purpose of this book, of course, was admission to the Ottoman military-administrative elite. In this context, the act of religious conversion was read as a statement of political loyalty by Ottomans and Christian Europeans alike. It is no coincidence, therefore, that Ladislaus Mörtz, in his petition to Murad III, explicitly linked his wish to become a Muslim with his wish to serve the sultan. That the latter is mentioned before Mörtz's commitment to Islam is a telling sign of just how important the commitment to the ruler's faith was deemed to be.¹⁰⁴ Indeed, Christine Isom-Verhaaren has convincingly argued that, 'in the case of vital men in government service, conversion demonstrated a loyalty to the ruler, which was the key to the functioning of the state.'¹⁰⁵ This idea had been central to the Ottoman *kul* system of convert-slave soldiers and governors from the outset and, over the course of the sixteenth century, it increasingly came to encompass the elite as a whole. As a result, adherence to Islam developed from the dominant form of expressing one's loyalty to the sultan to a *sine qua non* for all members of the military-administrative elite.¹⁰⁶ In the Ottoman context, sharing the sultan's faith was such a powerful marker of loyalty not least because conversion 'was irreversible within the Empire' because of the threat of the death penalty for apostasy. In fact, this link between religious conversion and political loyalty remained powerful, even as the effects of the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca of 1774 set in motion a process which began to undermine its basis by effectively removing the threat of the death penalty for apostasy at least for prisoners of war in Ottoman hands.¹⁰⁷

The link between shared religion and political loyalty was by no means an exclusively Ottoman phenomenon. Isom-Verhaaren explicitly compares the Ottoman Empire and early modern France, but one could add further European polities almost ad nauseam. When Busbecq declined Rüstem Paşa's offer to embrace Islam, he claims to have told the grand vizier that he preferred 'to remain in the religion in which I was born, and which was professed by my master'.¹⁰⁸ This statement was clearly meant—and almost certainly read—as a declaration of loyalty to the House of Habsburg.

¹⁰⁴ HHStA, Türkei I, box 81, bundle for 1593 July–Aug., fos. 210^r–^v and 214^r–^v ('Copi deren schriften'), at fo. 210^r.

¹⁰⁵ Isom-Verhaaren, 'Shifting Identities', 117; Isom-Verhaaren, *Allies with the Infidel*, 59. Compare Krstić, 'Illuminated by the Light of Islam', 57–8; Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 112–13.

¹⁰⁶ Isom-Verhaaren, 'Shifting Identities', 115–17; Isom-Verhaaren, *Allies with the Infidel*, 80–1.

¹⁰⁷ Will Smiley, 'The Meaning of Conversion: Treaty Law, State Knowledge, and Religious Identity among Russian Captives in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire', *International History Review*, 34 (2012), 568–73, quotation from p. 560; Smiley, '"When Peace Is Made, You Will Again Be Free": Islamic and Treaty Law, Black Sea Conflict, and the Emergence of "Prisoners of War" in the Ottoman Empire, 1739–1830', PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 2012, 22, 188.

¹⁰⁸ Busbecq, *Life and Letters*, i.235.

The extensive politicization of religion and the expectations thus engendered about political loyalties on the basis of religious affiliation strongly suggest that processes of confessionalization were not purely internal to European Christendom, but involved Ottoman Muslim elites as active parties. It is inherent, not least, in the adoption by the Ottoman sultan of the title of caliph after the conquest of Islam's holy cities from the Egyptian Mamluks in the reign of Selim I. Crucially, as Gilles Veinstein has pointed out, in this period, the Ottomans understood the caliph to possess 'the capacity to discern the correct interpretation of Islamic religious law among the many variants proposed by the *ulema* [religious scholars] ... and ... the power to enforce what he had understood to be right'. As an arbiter of religious truth as well as its enforcer, the sultan's role thus closely resembles that of Christian-European princes who sought to impose on their territories what they considered to be the correct flavour of Christianity.¹⁰⁹ Nevertheless, the Ottoman state's attempts to promote religious uniformity during the 'age of confessionalization' remained largely, if not always, restricted to Ottoman Muslims and, more often than not, the elite rather than the population at large. This, in addition to the focus on the enforcement of orthopraxy rather than the indoctrination with orthodoxy, distinguishes these processes from comparable developments in Christian Europe. Yet these differences are insufficient grounds for dismissing the applicability of the confessionalization paradigm to the Ottoman Empire out of hand. Rather, a close comparison provides us with an opportunity to both better understand the heuristic potential of the concept and the peculiarity of the historical conditions on whose basis it was developed. For, in contrast to the plurireligious Ottoman Empire (and Safavid Persia as well as Mughal India), the religious make-up of the population in most Christian-European territories was considerably more homogeneous. While non-Christians formed small minorities throughout the Holy Roman Empire, for example, the number of non-Muslims was substantial in the Ottoman domains.

¹⁰⁹ Veinstein, 'Religious Institutions', 325–6, 348–55.

4

In the Sultan's Service

For the Christian-European renegades studied in this book, the political meaning of conversion to Islam was central precisely because they were admitted to the rank of the sultan's servants to fight for, administer, and govern his realm. When Rüstem Paşa invited Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq to embrace Islam, he did so not merely out of concern for the latter's spiritual well-being. Although Busbecq carefully avoided making it explicit that Rüstem tried to recruit him into the sultan's service, this motivation is implied by the narrative position of the grand vizier's offer which follows immediately from Rüstem's praise of the Flemish diplomat's abilities—certainly meant to drive home his value to his superiors in Vienna—as well as his promise that 'Solyman [Süleyman the Magnificent], through his influence, was ready to confer on me great honours and great rewards.'¹ Similar incentives also feature prominently alongside violence in the stories of Orthodox neomartyrs in attempts to persuade and cajole such 'heroes of the faith' to convert to or reaffirm Islam.² In both cases, these promises served the literary purpose of emphasizing the steadfastness of the individuals in question in remaining faithful to Christianity. But even if we therefore should be careful about taking them as direct evidence that Ottoman patrons actively engaged in missionary activity in this way, many converts who entered the Ottoman military-administrative elite did of course benefit from this step in terms of status, power, and wealth. Given the ubiquity of converts in the Ottoman elite—which was well known because frequently remarked upon in Christian Europe—those who 'turned Turk' had at least a rudimentary awareness that doing so opened up new avenues of social and material advancement.

Perhaps no career illustrates what one could provocatively call the 'Ottoman dream' better than that of Andrea Celeste who, according to Venice's resident ambassador (Italian: *bailo*) Giovanni Moro, 'was born in... [Venice] in poor fortune' but died as Uluç Hasan Paşa in one of the most prestigious military-administrative offices of the Ottoman Empire, the admiralty (Turkish: *kapudanlık*). Celeste was eighteen or nineteen years old when he was captured and enslaved by Ottoman corsairs under the command of the famous Turgud Re'is in 1563. By then, the young Venetian had already gained naval experience aboard the merchant

¹ Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, *The Life and Letters of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, Seigneur de Bousbecque, Knight, Imperial Ambassador*, ed. and tr. Charles Thornton Forster and Francis Henry Blackburne Daniell, 2 vols (London: Paul, 1881), i.234–5, quotation from p. 235.

² Nomikos Michael Vaporis, *Witnesses for Christ: Orthodox Christian Neomartyrs of the Ottoman Period, 1437–1860* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2000), e.g. 108–9, 119, 131.

ship *Fabriana*.³ Although the details of the next few years are hazy, it seems that Celeste, while still a slave, embraced Islam, possibly at his owner's instigation, and henceforth became known as Hasan. On his initial master's death, Hasan passed first to Turgud Re'is and, after Turgud's death in 1565, to Uluç Ali, who was appointed *beylerbeyi* (governor-general) of Algiers in the same year. Hasan rose quickly in Ali's household to become his *kahya* or deputy.⁴ In 1577, Uluç Hasan entered the sultan's service directly when he was designated *sancakbeyi* (district governor) of Salonica (Turkish: Selanik, present-day Thessaloniki). He never assumed this post, however, instead lobbying for his appointment as *beylerbeyi* of Algiers. His wish was granted in the same year and he held this position until 1580. His subsequent career at the Porte remained deeply connected to North Africa and the naval milieu. In 1582, the Italian-born renegade resumed the governorship of Algiers, from whence he was transferred to Tripoli in present-day Libya in 1587. The following year, the sultan called him to Istanbul to assume the office of the *kapudan paşa* (grand admiral) which his former master Uluç Ali had held from autumn 1571 until his death in 1587, even though the two men had fallen out in 1585 and never reconciled. Like Ali, Uluç Hasan held the *kapudanlık* until his death in 1591 at the age of approximately 47.⁵

In terms of the highest rank attained, Hasan's immediate successor even outperformed the Venetian. Although the likewise Italian-born Çiğalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa (Scipione Cigala) was dismissed from the admiralty in 1595, he became grand vizier in October 1596 in recognition of his role in turning the tide during the battle of Mezökeresztes from a Habsburg into an Ottoman victory. Even though he held this post for just over one month, his fall from grace and exile to Bursa were only temporary and he remained an important figure in the Ottoman elite for the remainder of his life. Çiğalazade returned to the admiralty in 1598, after having been rehabilitated to serve as *beylerbeyi* of Syria in December 1597.⁶ In

³ Antonio Fabris, 'Hasan "Il veneziano" tra Algeri e Costantinopoli', in F. Lucchetta (ed.), 'Veneziani a Costantinopoli, musulmani a Venezia', *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* 15, supplement (1997), 51–2; Luigi Firpo (ed.), *Relazioni di ambasciatori veneti al Senato*, xiii: *Constantinopoli (1590–1793)* (Turin: Bottega d'Erasmo, 1984), 36–7; Eugenio Albèri (ed.), *Relazioni di ambasciatori veneti al Senato*, 15 vols (Florence: Società editrice fiorentina, 1839–63), ix.356–7.

⁴ Fabris, 'Hasan "Il veneziano"', 51; S. Soucek, 'Ulüdj 'Ali', in *EP*, vol. x (2000), p. 811; Ralf C. Müller, *Franken im Osten: Art, Umfang, Struktur und Dynamik der Migration aus dem lateinischen Westen in das Osmanische Reich des 15./16. Jahrhunderts auf der Grundlage von Reiseberichten* (Leipzig: Eudora, 2005), 259–60.

⁵ Fabris, 'Hasan "Il veneziano"', 52, 54–9, 64–5; İsmail Hâmi Danişmend, *Osmanlı Devlet Erkânı* (Istanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1971), 182–4; İdris Bostan, 'Kılıç Ali Paşa', in *EP*, pars. 6–9; Soucek, 'Ulüdj 'Ali'; Firpo (ed.), *Relazioni*, xiii.37–8; Albèri (ed.), *Relazioni*, ix.357–8. On Uluç Hasan Paşa's death, see also TNA, SP 97/2, pt 1, fo. 145^{r-v} (Edward Barton to William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Constantinople, 17/27 July 1591), at fo. 145^r.

⁶ Gino Benzoni, 'Cicala, Scipione', in A. M. Ghisalberti and M. Pavan (eds), *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1960–), xxv.323, 328–30; V. J. Parry, 'Çiğhāla- Zāde (djighāla- zāde) Yūsuf Sinān Pāshā', in *EP*, vol. ii (1965), p. 34; M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, 'Çiğala-zāde', in *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, 13 vols (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1940–88), iii.162–3; TNA, SP 97/3, fos. 160^r–161^v (Barton to Sir Robert Cecil, Constantinople, 20/30 Jan. 1596/7), at fo. 160^r; fos. 237^v–238^v (Henry Lello to Cecil, Constantinople, 22 Apr./2 May 1598), at fo. 237^v; fos. 243^r–244^v (Lello to Cecil, Constantinople, 3/13 June 1598), at fo. 243^r; KA, AFA, box 38, file 1597/10/9, fos. 438^r–439^v ('*Mathias von Zara* aussag so den 18 Octob[er] examinirt worden'),

1604, Ahmed I—the fourth sultan to rule the Well-Protected Domains since Cığalazade had begun his service for the House of Osman—entrusted command of the troops in the east of the Empire to the former admiral when war broke out between the Ottomans and Safavid Iran.⁷ Cığalazade had distinguished himself during the previous war with the Safavids (1578–90), especially due to his involvement in the conquest of Tabriz in 1585.⁸ As early as 1579, he had briefly assumed command of the Ottoman forces in the east when the current *serdar* (field marshal) and grand vizier, Lala Mustafa Paşa, was summoned to Istanbul. Mustafa Ali appears to have been rather impressed by Cığalazade's conduct, praising him as 'the respected high counsellor, the sword of power and revenge, the lion of the forest of awe, and majesty, the namesake of Joseph of Canaan . . . the valiant Sinān Pasha'.⁹ In 1583, the Italian-born renegade was promoted to the rank of vizier as a reward for his performance.¹⁰ In the early seventeenth century, his experience in the region was evidently still respected, even if he could not repeat his earlier successes. Cığalazade died in his early sixties near Diyarbakir in 1606, shortly after the forces under his command had suffered defeat.¹¹ In spite of stories circulating in individual Christian-European travel accounts, the renegade had not committed suicide—and certainly not with powdered diamonds, a popular poison in the early modern imagination though utterly non-toxic.¹² Early on in his career, Cığalazade

at fo. 438^v. For Cığalazade's role in the battle of Mezökeresztes, see Jan Schmidt, 'The Egri-Campaign of 1596: Military History and the Problem of Sources', in Andres Tietze (ed.), *Habsburgisch-Osmanische Beziehungen/Relations Habsbourg-Ottomanes: Wien, 15.–30. September 1583* (Vienna: Verlag des Verbandes der wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaften Österreichs, 1985), 125–44; TNA, SP 97/3, fos. 143^r–144^v (Barton to Cecil, Pera, 13/23 Nov. 1596); Levent Kaya Ocakaçan, 'Cığalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa (c. 1545–1606)', *Mediterranea: Recherche Storiche*, 12 (2015), 335–6.

⁷ Benzoni, 'Cicala, Scipione', 336; Parry, 'Çiğhāla- Zāde', 34; Gökbilgin, 'Çiğala-zāde', 163–4; Ocakaçan, 'Cığalazade', 338.

⁸ Benzoni, 'Cicala, Scipione', 322–3; Parry, 'Çiğhāla- Zāde', 34; Gökbilgin, 'Çiğala-zāde', 161–2.

⁹ *Muṣṭafā 'Alī's Counsel for Sultans of 1581*, ed. and tr. Andreas Tietze, 2 vols (Forschungen zur islamischen Philologie und Kulturgeschichte, 6–7; Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1979–82), ii.86. Andreas Tietze was puzzled by this reference since Ali also mentions that this Sinan Paşa was grand vizier, which, to Tietze, suggested a reference to Koca Sinan Paşa. However, as Tietze rightly noted, Koca Sinan was not called Yusuf. In any case, he was first appointed grand vizier in August 1580, considerably after the episode described by Ali. According to İbrahim Peçevi, *Peçevi tarîhi*, ed. Murat Uraz, 2 vols (Istanbul: Son Telgraf Matbaası, 1968–9), ii.330, it was Cığalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa who replaced Mustafa Paşa in 1579. This explains Ali's reference to Joseph of Canaan. It does not explain, however, why he calls him grand vizier. Cığalazade definitely did not hold that office at the time and had not even been raised to the rank of vizier yet.

¹⁰ Parry, 'Çiğhāla- Zāde', 34; Gökbilgin, 'Çiğala-zāde', 161.

¹¹ Benzoni, 'Cicala, Scipione', 337; Parry, 'Çiğhāla- Zāde', 34; Gökbilgin, 'Çiğala-zāde', 164; Ocakaçan, 'Cığalazade', 338–9; Kâtib Çelebi, *The Gift to the Great Ones on Naval Campaigns*, ed. İdris Bostan, tr. Uzman Tercüme Ltd Şti. (Ankara: Prime Ministry Undersecretariat for Maritime Affairs, 2008), 115, 138; TNA SP 97/5, fos. 55^r–56^v (James Hawood to Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, Aleppo, 31 Jan./10 Feb. 1605/6).

¹² In scholarship, the story of Cığalazade's suicide is featured in A. D. Alderson, *The Structure of the Ottoman Dynasty* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), table XXX, n. 9; Godfrey Goodwin, *The Janissaries* (pbk edn, London: Saqi Books, 2006), 154. Alderson points to an unspecified footnote in *Sir Anthony Sherley and His Persian Adventure*, ed. Edward Denison Ross (London: Routledge, 1933; repr. 2004), 21 as his source. Rather than by Sherley himself, this story is given by Ross who, in turn, took it from Samuel Purchas' preface to the narrative by Anthony's brother Robert included in the 1625 edition of *Hakluytus Posthumus*. See Sherley, *Persian Adventure*, 11; Samuel Purchas (ed.), *Hakluytus Posthumus*;

had achieved the high honour of marrying into the sultan's family. Although never technically a *damad* (son-in-law) of a sultan, he married first one, then, after his first wife had passed away, another of Süleyman's great-granddaughters. Both were daughters of Ayşe Hanım, Süleyman's granddaughter by Mihrimah Sultan and his trusted grand vizier Rüstem Paşa. Such marriages were crucial in cementing the relationship between patron and client, in this case in the first instance Semiz Ahmed Paşa, Ayşe Hanım's husband and Sokollu Mehmed Paşa's successor as grand vizier, but, through his grandmother-in-law, also the Ottoman dynasty.¹³

The careers of these two *kapudan paşas* delineate the upper limits of what individual renegades might achieve in the sultan's service. As much as the offices and honours which they attained, the fact that both died of natural causes is a testament to their success in the Ottoman political arena. The significance of this achievement becomes clear when one bears in mind that the long-serving grand vizier Sokollu Mehmed Paşa had been assassinated in 1579 while another grand vizier, Ferhad Paşa, was executed on the sultan's orders after his dismissal from this office in the summer of 1595.¹⁴ Such careers were truly extraordinary for members of the Ottoman elite more generally. There were, after all, only a limited number of top positions to fill at any given moment.¹⁵ How rare, relatively speaking, high-ranking officials among the Empire's population of Christian-European converts must have been, is evident from the number of individuals in my sample of renegades whose titles were recorded in the sources. In fact, any titles at all are mentioned in only thirty out of 137 cases (21.9 per cent). Of these, the majority were *bey*s (twelve persons), meaning that they enjoyed the same rank as a *sancak-beyi*, even if not necessarily the actual position, and *ağas* (eight persons), implying that they were officers or enjoyed an equivalent rank outside the military.¹⁶

or, *Purchas His Pilgrimes: Contayning a History of the World in Sea Voyages and Land Travells by Englishmen and Others*, 20 vols (Glasgow: MacLehose, 1905), x.376. To my knowledge, the only contemporary to mention that Çiğalazade had committed suicide (and by ingesting diamonds) is the Portuguese Augustinian friar Antonio de Gouvea who was in Persia during the Ottoman-Safavid war: Antonio de Gouvea, *Relaçam, em que se tratam as guerras e grandes victorias que alcançouo gråde rey da Persia Xá Abbas dogrão Turco Mahometto, & seu filho Amethe* (Lisbon, 1611), sig. S6^v (book 2, ch. 27). The diplomatic reports from Istanbul which I have been able to consult, in contrast, contain no reference to suicide by whatever means. For a refutation of this story, see also 'Cicala Pasha—A Chapter of Turkish History', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 48/297 (July 1840), 32–3, of which apparently neither Ross, nor Alderson were aware when preparing their works.

¹³ Alderson, *Structure*, table XXX; Franz Babinger, 'Mihr-i Mâh Sultân', in *EP*, vol. vii (1993), pp. 6–7; J. H. Mordtmann and V. L. Ménage, 'Feridün Beg', in *EP*, vol. ii (1965), pp. 881–2; Benzoni, 'Cicala, Scipione', 321–2; Parry, 'Çiğhâla- Zâde', 33–4; Gökbilgin, 'Çiğala-zâde', 161; Leslie P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (Studies in Middle Eastern History; New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 127–8, 261; Henning Sievert, *Zwischen arabischer Provinz und Hoher Pforte: Beziehungen, Bildung und Politik des osmanischen Bürokraten Râğib Mehmed Paşa (st. 1763)* (Kultur, Recht und Politik in muslimischen Gesellschaften, 11; Würzburg: Ergon, 2008), 340.

¹⁴ Gilles Veinstein, 'Sokollu Mehmed Paşa', in *EP*, vol. ix (1997), p. 710; V. J. Parry, 'Ferhad Pasha', in *EP*, vol. ii (1965), pp. 880–1.

¹⁵ This becomes readily apparent even from the most cursory perusal of Danişmend, *Osmanlı Devlet Erkânı*.

¹⁶ Gustav Bayerle, *Pashas, Beks, and Effendis: A Historical Dictionary of Titles and Terms in the Ottoman Empire* (Istanbul: Isis, 1997), s.vv. 'ağa', 'beg', 'sancak begi'; Josef Matuz, 'Die

A further six (4.4 per cent of the overall sample) attained the title of *paşa*, and of these, an overwhelming majority of five persons, were even promoted to the rank of vizier and thus became members of the *divan-i hümayun*, the imperial council. This last number, incidentally, encompasses all four renegades in the sample who at one time or other served as *kapudan paşas*.¹⁷ Moreover, *paşas* are quite possibly over-represented in the sample as a whole, simply because they were more visible to foreign observers as well as Ottoman chroniclers by virtue of their high rank and the offices which went with it.

A close investigation of individual renegades' careers reveals that, in many instances, the integration of such geographical foreigners into the Ottoman elite followed the patterns and avenues used for the integration of other 'outsiders', most importantly, of course, those boys and young men recruited from among the Empire's Christian population through the institution of the *devşirme*. Indeed, as far as recruitment into state service is concerned, there was virtually no distinction between individuals on the basis of origins, even if renegades, by virtue of particular skills, knowledge, and contacts acquired prior to conversion had an edge over competitors in certain offices and functions. One aspect in which foreign origins do seem to have played a significant role, however, was socialization within the Ottoman elite, where they exerted a powerful influence on the formation of all-important patronage networks. These patterns of socialization put into question the idea of a radical break in converts' identities after having 'turned Turk', a theme which will form one of the threads throughout the remainder of this book.

RECRUITMENT AND INTEGRATION

In spite of their extraordinariness, the examples of Uluç Hasan and Cığalazade are representative of the two most important avenues by which one entered and was integrated into the Ottoman military-administrative elite in the sixteenth century: the household of the sultan and the households of grandees. These avenues were, of course, merely variations on the same theme in which attachment to a patron was vital for the pursuit of a career in the service of the Ottoman state. In Metin Kunt's words, 'households were the building blocks of the Ottoman political edifice' and Jane Hathaway's work underscores their importance as 'the fundamental assimilative structure of Ottoman elite society'.¹⁸ In this latter capacity, the integrative

Pfortendolmetscher zur Herrschaftszeit Süleymāns des Prächtigen', *Südost-Forschungen*, 34 (1975), 34–5.

¹⁷ For the *kapudan paşa*'s inclusion in the *divan*, see Salih Özbaran, 'Kapudan Paşa', in *EP*, vol. iv (1978), pp. 571–2; Bernard Lewis, 'Diwān-i Humāyūn', in *EP*, vol. ii (1965), p. 338; Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age, 1300–1600*, tr. Norman Itzkowitz and Colin Imber (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973), 94; Benjamin J. Slot, *Archipelagus turbatus: Les Cyclades entre colonisation latine et occupation ottomane, c. 1500–1718*, 2 vols (Istanbul: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul, 1982), i.100.

¹⁸ Metin İ. Kunt, 'Royal and Other Households', in Christine Woodhead (ed.), *The Ottoman World* (The Routledge Worlds; London: Routledge, 2012), 103; Jane Hathaway, *The Politics of*

power of the household was such that, from an Ottoman point of view, the distinction between 'domestic' and 'foreign' recruits, that is, between those who had been Ottoman subjects to start with and 'those who [had] come from another country' was virtually meaningless and therefore hardly ever made in either administrative documents or chronicles.¹⁹ The relative ordinariness, from an Ottoman point of view, of Christian Europeans who had entered the Ottoman elite is illustrated by Cigalazade's career whose general features are indistinguishable from those of other high-ranking officials such as Sokollu Mehmed Paşa. Indeed, Cigalazade was integrated into the Ottoman military-administrative elite in exactly the same way as the top percentage of *devşirme* recruits.

Like Hasan, Scipione Cigala had been taken captive at sea in 1561 by Ottoman corsairs from the Maghreb, possibly even by Turgud Re'is as well. Already 17 at the time of his capture, the son of the Genoese corsair Visconte Cigala had gained some experience in naval affairs.²⁰ Although, due to Scipione's youth, he probably had not yet captained a ship of his own, it is highly likely that he had served aboard one of his father's vessels. In any case, the two men were sailing together when they were captured. Visconte's corsairing points to a degree of affluence and indeed, unlike Hasan, Scipione was not of humble origins, but of noble stock. The Cigalas, in fact, were one of the older noble families of Genoa, even if Visconte and his immediate dependents had moved to Sicily. This crucial difference in status had important consequences for Scipione's admission to the Ottoman elite. Soon after the two men had arrived in North Africa with their captors, they were sent on to Istanbul where Scipione embraced Islam and was taken into the palace school for training alongside the boys and young men who had been selected through the *devşirme*.²¹ Having already been enslaved by his captors, by passing into the sultan's possession and embracing Islam, the Italian, too, became a slave of the Porte (*kapıkulu*) and was thus integrated into the sultan's household. His privileged training, moreover, destined him for high office.²²

That the Cigalas had not remained in Barbary, like Uluç Hasan would after his enslavement two years later, is noteworthy. This different treatment was a direct result of Visconte and Scipione's social standing as members of the nobility which made them economically valuable and thus a suitable gift for the sultan, if indeed they were presented as gifts. More importantly, Visconte Cigala's naval record against the Ottomans made him a worthy prize and it would only have been

Household in Ottoman Egypt: The Rise of the Qazdağlıs (Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization; Cambridge: CUP, 1997), 167.

¹⁹ See also Marc David Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam: Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe* (New York: OUP, 2008), 5. Quotation from Mustafa Ali, *Counsel*, i.62.

²⁰ Benzoni, 'Cicala, Scipione', 320; Domenico Montuoro, 'I Cigala, una famiglia feudale tra Genova, Sicilia, Turchia e Calabria', *Mediterranea: Ricerche Storiche*, 6 (2009), 284–6.

²¹ Gino Benzoni, 'Cicala, Visconte', in Ghisalberti and Pavan (eds), *Dizionario biografico*, xxv.340–6; Benzoni, 'Cicala, Scipione', 320; Gökbilgin, 'Cigala-zâde', 161; Parry, 'Çiğhala- Zâde'; Ralf C. Müller, *Prosopographie der Reisenden und Migranten ins Osmanische Reich (1396–1611)*, 10 vols (Leipzig: Eudora, 2006), ii.128–9; Müller, *Franken im Osten*, 451.

²² Barnette Miller, *The Palace School of Muhammad the Conqueror* (Harvard Historical Monographs, 17; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1941), 163.

sensible to interrogate him in the capital in hope of gaining intelligence about the location, state, and plans of Philip II's fleet.²³ In addition, it is quite likely that in the Mediterranean, as along the Habsburg–Ottoman land frontier, high-ranking captives had to be surrendered to the Porte and could not be kept as soldiers' and sailors' private property.²⁴ The Italians' transfer from Tripoli may even have been part of the *pencik*, technically the sultan's share in all captives taken, although this seems to have been converted to cash payments in lieu of actually surrendering captives.²⁵ Either way, Cigalazade's subsequent admission into the sultan's household confirms that, in spite of the preponderance of *devşirme* recruits in the Ottoman Empire's 'classical age', recruitment from slaves, the very origin of the *kapıkulu* system, continued unabated.

Incidentally, Cigalazade's admission to the sultan's household somewhat mitigates Busbecq's optimistic assessment of the irrelevance of birth for careers in Ottoman service.²⁶ After all, his entry was clearly facilitated by his parentage, almost as early as the point of capture. And he was not the only one.²⁷ On the other hand, the recruitment of captives, which by the sixteenth century may have been strongly biased in favour of individuals of noble background, was numerically of far less importance than the *devşirme*, which, by definition, focused on individuals of lower status, in replenishing the ranks of the military branch of the Ottoman elite (*seyfiye*). In any case, while birth may not have been entirely irrelevant to entering the Ottoman elite in select cases, what mattered afterwards, as Rhoads Murphey has put it, were 'merit, competence, experience, loyalty and trustworthiness' as well as connections.²⁸ After admission to Topkapı Palace, even the scion of the house of Cigala had to prove himself worthy of office.

²³ On the interrogation of prisoners in order to gather information, see Emrah Safa Gürkan, 'Espionage in the 16th Century Mediterranean: Secret Diplomacy, Mediterranean Go-Betweens and the Ottoman Habsburg Rivalry', PhD dissertation, Georgetown University, Washington, DC, 2012, 355–7, 387–8; Gábor Ágoston, 'Information, Ideology, and Limits of Imperial Policy: Ottoman Grand Strategy in the Context of Ottoman–Habsburg Rivalry', in Virginia Aksan and Daniel Goffman (eds), *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), 88.

²⁴ The obligation to surrender such 'major captives' to the monarch was frequently included in field regulations. An example can be found in KA, AFA, box 40, file 1600/9/ad 3, fos. 322^v–339^v ('Veldt-Ordnung od[er] *Regulament* herausgegeben unter Erzherzogen *Matthiae* als Kay[serlicher] Veldtgeneralus d[er] Philip-Emanuel Herzog zu Lotring[en] General Lieutenant ernennet worden ist'), at fo. 331^r. See also Géza Pálffy, 'Ransom Slavery along the Ottoman–Hungarian Frontier in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor (eds), *Ransom Slavery along the Ottoman Borders (Early Fifteenth–Early Eighteenth Centuries)* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 37; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 43–6.

²⁵ C. E. Bosworth et al., 'Pendjik', in *EP*, vol. viii (1995), pp. 293–4; Y. Hakan Erdem, *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire and Its Demise, 1800–1909* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), 19–20.

²⁶ Busbecq, *Life and Letters*, i.154.

²⁷ See Maria Pia Pedani, 'Venetian Slaves in the Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern Period', in Stefan Hanß and Juliane Schiel (eds), *Mediterranean Slavery Revisited (500–1800)/Neue Perspektiven auf mediterrane Sklaverei (500–1800)* (Zurich: Chronos, 2014), 311, 314–15; Pedani, 'Veneziani a Costantinopoli alla fine del XVI secolo', in Lucchetta (ed.), 'Veneziani', 78–9; HHStA, StAbt, Venedig, Berichte, box 13, fos. 557^r–558^v (Georg Fugger the Elder to Emperor Rudolf II, Venice, 28 Aug. 1609), at fo. 557^r; fos. 628^v–629^v (Fugger to Rudolf II, Venice, 30 Apr. 1610), at fo. 628^v.

²⁸ Rhoads Murphey, *Exploring Ottoman Sovereignty: Tradition, Image, and Practice in the Ottoman Imperial Household, 1400–1800* (London: Continuum, 2008), 199.

Çiğalazade's career exhibits numerous parallels to other high-ranking Ottomans who emerged from the palace schools. One of the most important features shared between the later grand viziers Rüstem Paşa, Sokollu Mehmed Paşa, and Çiğalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa is the fact that all three had held the office of the sultan's sword bearer (*silahdar*) during their time at the palace.²⁹ The *silahdar* was not only responsible for the sultan's weapons; as an official who served in the privy chamber, he enjoyed great proximity to the ruler and played an important role in relaying messages to and from the monarch. When the latter went on campaign, the *silahdars* also functioned as a personal bodyguard.³⁰ They were therefore in a privileged position to win the sultan's trust and the personal relations forged during that time would be important in later years. Yet there is no direct connection between the office and Çiğalazade's call to the grand vizierate since, by then, the sultan whom he had served as *silahdar*, Selim II, had been succeeded by his great-grandson Mehmed III. The position of *silahdar* also allowed forging lasting bonds with the eunuchs who served in the privy chamber and who, in principle at least, enjoyed more permanent positions of proximity to the sultan. It is quite probable, although not confirmed, that Çiğalazade met and befriended the later chief of the white eunuchs (*kapı ağası*), Gazanfer, a convert to Islam from Venice, while they were both serving in the palace.³¹

The importance of such personal relations is evident in the rapidity of promotion once these *kapıkulus* had graduated from the palace. In 1546, Sokollu Mehmed Paşa, for instance, was appointed *kapudan paşa* within five years of leaving the inner palace as commander of the palace guard (*kapucibaşı*).³² In this respect, Piyale Paşa's biography exactly mirrors that of the later grand vizier since he, too, became *kapucibaşı* in 1549 and *kapudan paşa* in 1554.³³ Çiğalazade, in contrast, may have had to wait a little longer before he was given his first provincial governorship but when he was, he began his provincial career as a *beylerbeyi*, the governor of a province, rather than a *sancakbeyi*, the governor of a mere district, the rank which had been accorded to Sokollu and Piyale when they took over the *kapudanlık*. In addition, the Italian-born renegade had seen his first major promotion only two years after having taken charge of the palace guard in 1573 when he was appointed commander of the janissaries (*yeniçeri ağası*) in 1575. Contrary to the claims of some historians, who have mistaken Koca Sinan Paşa for the Italian-born renegade, however, he had no part in the Ottoman reconquest of Tunis in 1574. In fact, he

²⁹ Christine Woodhead, 'Rüstem Paşa', in *EP*, vol. viii (1995), p. 640; Veinstein, 'Sokollu Mehmed Paşa', 706–7; Parry, 'Çiğhala- Zâde', 33.

³⁰ Shai Har-El, 'Silâhdâr', in *EP*, vol. ix (1997), p. 610; Bayerle, *Pashas, Begg, and Effendis*, s.v. 'silâhdâr'.

³¹ Maria Pia Pedani, 'Safiye's Household and Venetian Diplomacy', *Turcica*, 32 (2000), 14; Pedani, 'Veneziani', 68–9; Eric R. Dursteler, *Renegade Women: Gender, Identity, and Boundaries in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), 4; Dursteler, 'Fatima Hatun née Beatrice Michiel: Renegade Women in the Early Modern Mediterranean', *Medieval History Journal*, 12 (2009), 356; Günhan Börekçi, 'Factions and Favorites at the Courts of Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603–17) and His Immediate Predecessors', PhD dissertation, Ohio State University, Columbus, 2010, 49–50, 52.

³² Veinstein, 'Sokollu Mehmed Paşa', 706–7; Özbaran, 'Kapudan Paşa'.

³³ Franz Babinger, 'Piyale Paşa', in *EP*, vol. viii (1995), p. 316.

was in Moldavia that year to secure the installation of Petru VI as the new voivode in place of the rebellious Ioan Vodă.³⁴

What is truly remarkable about Cığalazade's early career is that his origins from outside the Ottoman Empire do not seem to have mattered at all. It is almost as though Selim II and Murad III prefigured Mustafa Ali's later advice to employ 'those who have come from another country' exclusively

on the very opposite side in relation to the border they have quitted . . . in order not to cause those who were befallen by the insanity of youthful spontaneity to repent and go back . . . [until] they are quite settled and surrounded by wives and children.³⁵

Even at a time when the Italian-born renegade had not only acculturated but had also been married for the second time, the provincial appointments which he received prior to the *kapudanlık* were all situated at the border with Iran and thus as far away from the Mediterranean as possible. In his military duty there, neither his command of Christian-European languages nor whatever naval experience he had acquired prior to conversion to Islam were of particular use in the land-locked campaigns waged against the Safavids.

While Cığalazade's career in the Ottoman Empire in this respect stands in marked contrast to that of Uluç Hasan whose professional activities remained deeply connected to the Mediterranean throughout his life, one needs to be careful not to jump to conclusions. It is more likely that there simply was much less need for a man of his talents in the western provinces of the Ottoman Empire at this time, particularly in the admiralty which was already in the very capable hands of Uluç Ali Paşa. Indeed, the rapid succession of Cığalazade's initial promotions is indicative not just of the recognition of his value, but also the trust placed in him. With the western theatre mostly quiet after the end of the War of Cyprus (1570–3) and the Ottoman reconquest of Tunis (1574), the Italian-born convert was considerably more useful as a military commander in the war with Iran. This interpretation is further supported by his appointment to the admiralty in 1591, when war with Iran had drawn to a close and the *kapudanlık* had become vacant as a result of Uluç Hasan's death. The geographic trajectory of Cığalazade's career, therefore, was most of all a result of the requirements of the day. The geographic range of his postings, moreover, also reflected the fact that he had entered the sultan's service in the imperial centre and had received training which was intended to prepare him for service as a generalist who could be sent to all parts of the Ottoman Empire as and when needed.

In a similar vein, the regional focus of Uluç Hasan's positions in the sultan's service, too, was a consequence of the circumstances of his entry into office. Hasan's abilities in naval matters and his familiarity with North Africa notwithstanding, it is

³⁴ Benzoni, 'Cicala, Scipione', 320–1; Ocakaçan, 'Cigalazade', 329. The mistaken belief that Cığalazade had participated in the campaign against Tunis of 1574 is found, for example, in Hugh Bicheno, *Crescent and Cross: The Battle of Lepanto, 1571* (London: Cassell, 2003), 268. For Koca Sinan's involvement in this theatre, see Franz Babinger and Géza Dávid, 'Sinân Pasha, Khodja: 2. The Vizier and Statesman (d. 1004/1596)', in *EP*, vol. ix (1997), p. 631.

³⁵ Mustafa Ali, *Counsel*, i.62.

rather remarkable that the Venetian convert began his career in the Ottoman administration in such a high rank as that of governor of Algiers. It is highly likely, therefore, that he ultimately owed this appointment to his patron and head of household Uluç Ali Paşa who knew his protégée's abilities and, as the current *kapudan paşa*, was in a position to name candidates for both governorships.³⁶ Besides, the Venetian was not the only member of Uluç Ali's household to obtain a position of rank in the sultan's service. In 1606, the *kapudanlık* was awarded to another trusted client of his and likewise an Italian-born renegade whom Ali had recommended as his possible successor to this office alongside Uluç Hasan shortly before his death: Frenk Cafer Paşa. By the time Cafer was given charge of the admiralty, he had already gained valuable experience in Ottoman state service as governor of Cyprus as well as the two Tripolis in present-day Libya and Lebanon. As in Uluç Hasan's case, all these provinces were closely related to the *kapudan paşa's* Mediterranean theatre of activity.³⁷

The biography of Uluç Ali himself closely resembles those of his two clients and admirals-to-be. Born in Calabria as Giovanni Dionigi Galeni, he, too, had been taken captive by North African corsairs in 1520 when he was in his mid to late teens. After his enslavement, he was initially made to serve as a rower on a North African galley. Galeni eventually converted to Islam after which he was known as Uluç Ali and rose in the community of corsairs to become a successful ship captain in his own right. In 1548 he became attached to Turgud Re'is, although the circumstances and nature of this attachment remain unclear.³⁸ Turgud's career, in fact, exemplifies what Joshua White, with reference to Mustafa Ali, has described as the 'multi-stage pirate life-cycle, from local predatory raider to long-distance corsair'. Like many of the examples discussed by White, Turgud had begun his naval career in the Aegean as a *levend*, an ambiguous term which Ottomans applied to naval irregulars as well as pirates and corsairs, to gradually shift his basis of operation further south to the Maghreb and his theatre of activity towards the Western Mediterranean.³⁹ Turgud and his ships time and again joined the Ottoman fleet as naval irregulars, but he did not receive direct appointment until after his successful participation in the conquest of Tunis in 1551. In that year, both Turgud Re'is and Uluç Ali became *sancakbeyis*. Ali continued to participate in

³⁶ Kunt, 'Households', 110; Sievert, *Zwischen arabischer Provinz und Hoher Pforte*, 323–4; Özbaran, 'Kapudan Paşa', 572.

³⁷ Kâtib Çelebi, *Gift to the Great Ones*, 115, 138, quotation from p. 138; Fabris, 'Hasan "Il veneziano"', 53, 55–6; Danişmend, *Osmanlı Devlet Erkânı*, 185.

³⁸ Bostan, 'Kılıç Ali', pars. 1–2. The biography of this particular renegade has been examined in great detail by numerous scholars, most recently by Emilio Sola Castaño, *Uchali: El Calabrés Tiñoso, o el mito del corsario muladí en la frontera* (Barcelona: Edicions Bellaterra, 2010). Shorter accounts are also available in Soucek, 'Ulūdī 'Alī'; Müller, *Prosopographie*, iii.465. As far as the chronology of Uluç Ali's appointments in Ottoman state service are concerned, the biographical sketch here follows İdris Bostan's article in the *EP* because it revises many of the chronological details of Uluç Ali's career on the basis of Ottoman archival documents.

³⁹ Soucek, 'Ulūdī 'Alī'; Joshua Michael White, 'Catch and Release: Piracy, Slavery, and Law in the Early Modern Ottoman Mediterranean', PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 2012, 28–38, quotation from p. 29; J. H. Kramers, W. J. Griswold, and T. Majda, 'Lewend', in *EP*, vol. v (1986), pp. 728–9.

Ottoman naval operations as part of Turgud's retinue before he was made captain of an imperial galley in 1556.⁴⁰ Together, the two men served in the Battle of Djerba in 1560 and the siege of Malta in 1565. While Turgud was fatally wounded during the latter engagement, Uluç Ali, who had been given responsibility for the defence of the Ottoman Aegean after Djerba, succeeded his erstwhile patron to the *beylerbeylik* of Algiers. In this position he made significant contributions to strengthening the Ottoman claim to suzerainty over the Maghreb against the Spanish. He distinguished himself during the naval campaigns of 1571 which culminated in the Battle of Lepanto. Despite the Ottoman defeat, and in recognition of his excellent record, he received the honorific epithet *Kılıç* (sword) and was appointed *kapudan paşa* to oversee the rebuilding of the destroyed Ottoman fleet. In the aftermath, Ali participated in a number of further campaigns, crucially supporting the reconquest of Tunis from the King of Spain's forces during the Battle of La Goletta in 1574.⁴¹ Although he repeatedly lobbied for a renewal of naval campaigns in the Western Mediterranean throughout the 1580s, the ongoing war with the Safavids prevented the sultan and his fellow viziers from lending their support to the undertakings suggested by the admiral.⁴²

Although not *kapıkulu* in the classical sense, when Uluç Ali and Uluç Hasan entered the Empire's official hierarchy, they probably were formally incorporated into the sultan's household and accorded the status of *kuls*. This much is suggested not least by the fact that both men's considerable estates fell to the Ottoman treasury after their deaths.⁴³ Uluç Ali, moreover, was bound at least by fictive ties of kinship to the dynasty for, in 1575, he was given the honour—and financial obligation, about which he was reportedly less than thrilled—of what the Imperial ambassador David Ungnad at one time called the 'ring bearer' (*compadre dell'anello*), at another the bride's attendant (*Brautführer*) at the wedding of the German-born Zal Mahmud Paşa with Murad III's sister Şah Sultan.⁴⁴ If Ali and Hasan were not formally *kuls*, then at least they were not treated very differently, perhaps not merely because they had converted to Islam as slaves, but also because, as Metin Kunt has pointed out, even free-born Muslims who entered the ranks of the *seyfiye* increasingly came to be treated as *kuls* from the later sixteenth century onwards,

⁴⁰ Bostan, 'Kılıç Ali', pars. 2–3; Soucek, 'Ulüdj 'Alî', 811; Soucek, 'Törghud Re'is', in *EP*, vol. x (2000), p. 571.

⁴¹ Bostan, 'Kılıç Ali', pars. 4–7; Soucek, 'Ulüdj 'Alî', 811.

⁴² Emrah Safa Gürkan, 'Fooling the Sultan: Information, Decision-Making and the "Mediterranean Faction" (1585–1587)', *Osmanlı Araştırmaları/Journal of Ottoman Studies*, 45 (2015), esp. 74–81.

⁴³ Bostan, 'Kılıç Ali', par. 9; TNA, SP 97/2, pt 2, fo. 145^{r-v} (Barton to Burghley, Constantinople, 17/27 July 1591), at fo. 145^r.

⁴⁴ HHStA, Türkei I, box. 31, bundle for 1575 Mar., fos. 139^r–143^v (David Ungnad to Emperor Maximilian II, Constantinople, 30 Mar. 1575), at fo. 141^v; fos. 4^{r-v} (Ungnad to Maximilian II, Constantinople, duplicate of 5 Mar. 1575 with postscript dated 16 Apr.); *Stephan Gerlachs dess aeltern Tage-Buch* (Frankfurt, 1674), 97–8, 283, 393, 402; Suraiya N. Faroqhi, 'Shāh Sultān, 2.', in *EP*, vol. ix (1997), p. 200; Alexander H. de Groot, 'Murād III', in *EP*, vol. viii (1993), p. 597; Müller, *Franken im Osten*, 250, 477; Müller, *Prosopographie*, x.285–7; Peirce, *Imperial Harem*, 67–8. Alderson, *Structure*, table XXXI misdates both the wedding and the deaths of Zal Mahmud Paşa and his wife to 1577 and 1580, respectively.

even when their backgrounds theoretically prohibited their enslavement under Islamic law.⁴⁵

The integration into the sultan's service of men such as Turgud, Uluç Ali, and Uluç Hasan, who, as former *levends* and Maghrebi corsairs, were very much on the margins of empire, represents what was not only another recruitment strategy for the Ottoman military-administrative elite but also a frequently effective way of dealing with acute challenges to the sultan's authority. This co-optation of people on the margins into the Ottoman imperial system, either in order to harness much-needed talent or to placate rebels, is in many ways a hallmark of Ottoman pragmatism. When it became apparent that the uprising commanded by Karayazıcı Abdülhalim, which constituted the first of the so-called Celali rebellions, could only be subdued at great cost of money and lives, Mehmed III attempted to co-opt him and his followers in 1602 by granting an amnesty and appointing a large number of rebels to various positions across the Empire. Although this time the attempt was unsuccessful, at other times and in other contexts the Ottomans indeed successfully converted bandits into bureaucrats.⁴⁶

Yet even then, such measures did not integrate merely individuals into the Ottoman military-administrative elite, but inevitably the households which they headed. After all, the ability to oppose the Ottoman state required a loyal power base whose core was provided by the leaders' followers and supporters, their slaves, and their families. This is particularly evident in the case of Canboladoğlu Ali Paşa, 'one of the most infamous bandits' in the early seventeenth century, who petitioned Ahmed I for appointments for himself as well as a number of his supporters in 1606. As Karen Barkey has observed, 'By the end of his letter [to the sultan], Canboladoğlu Ali Pasha had promised more than 16,000 men to fight the upcoming wars on the eastern front and demanded fourteen high-level administrative positions in the east for himself and a variety of his regional officials.'⁴⁷ The examples of Karayazıcı Abdülhalim, Canboladoğlu Ali, Turgud, Uluç Ali, and Uluç Hasan illustrate the importance of households in integrating their members into the Ottoman military-administrative elite. The institution thus also provided 'a strategy designed to enable a group with a common interest to succeed in the never-ending competition for revenues, influence, and imperial favor'.⁴⁸ This could be achieved either by offering valuable services, as in Turgud's case, or, alternatively, by opposing and resisting the Ottoman state as Karayazıcı and Canboladoğlu did. Both approaches proved fruitful strategies for currying imperial patronage and both relied on the household as a resource and power base which provided the head of household with the means to make a bid for power.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Metin İ. Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550–1650* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 97.

⁴⁶ Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), esp. 204–5 for Karayazıcı; Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: CUP, 2008), 179, 199; Börekçi, 'Factions and Favorites', 31.

⁴⁷ Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats*, 189–91, quotations from p. 191.

⁴⁸ Hathaway, *Politics of Household*, 167.

⁴⁹ Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats* repeatedly makes this point, e.g. on pp. 18, 56, and 195–7.

In light of the importance of household membership in determining patronage relationships, it is noteworthy that Uluç Hasan and his patron Uluç Ali shared the same epithet (*nisbe*). This particular *nisbe* is a clear reference to the two men's foreign origins, of course. However, there was no shortage of labels for expressing differences on the basis of geographical origins in the Ottoman Empire. As Italians, Ali as well as Hasan would equally have qualified for the epithet *Frenk* (someone from Christian Europe), while Hasan might just as well have been referred to as *Venedikli* to distinguish him from his patron.⁵⁰ The shared epithet thus recalls the naming patterns among members of Egyptian military households during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries studied by Jane Hathaway. Even in salary registers, that is in official documents drawn up by local administrators, soldiers were frequently identified by their household associations, underscoring the importance of patronage ties even for the purpose of governance.⁵¹ It is likely that, in the case of the two Uluç, similar practices ultimately informed the ways in which their names were recorded for posterity although Hasan did not adopt Ali's honorific identification as Kılıç because it was a mark of distinction which the sultan had bestowed exclusively on Ali.

USEFUL SKILLS AND USEFUL KNOWLEDGE

Uluç Ali's household encompassed what appears to be an unusually large number of Christian-European converts to Islam, many of whom were of Italianate origins. In addition to Uluç Ali himself and the two *kapudan paşas* Uluç Hasan and Frenk Cafer, this group included Hasan's successors as Ali's *kahyas*, Memi, Rıdvan, and Hasan Korsika. Moreover, Emrah Safa Gürkan has identified a number of other Italian- and Spanish-born renegades whom Uluç Ali used to obtain intelligence from the peninsula, particularly from the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily.⁵²

In the case of Italians, in particular, such 'ethnic' clustering might have been a result of demographics. The naval wars with Spain and Venice in the mid-seventeenth century as well as raids on Italian shores and Italian shipping ensured that Italians formed the numerically largest group among the populations of captives in Istanbul as well as the Maghreb in this period. This ratio was naturally mirrored in the composition of the convert population.⁵³ On the other hand, due

⁵⁰ See Nur Sobers-Khan, *Slaves without Shackles: Forced Labour and Manumission in the Galata Court Registers, 1560–1572* (Studien zur Sprache, Geschichte und Kultur der Türkvolker, 20; Berlin: Schwarz, 2014), 92–3; Bernard Lewis and J. F. P. Hopkins, 'İfrandj or Firandj', in *EP*, vol. iii (1971), pp. 1044–6. Maria Pia Pedani occasionally refers to Hasan as *Venedikli* although there seems to be no basis for this in Ottoman sources. See, for example, Pedani, 'Safiye's Household', 13.

⁵¹ Hathaway, *Politics of Household*, 22–3.

⁵² Fabris, 'Hasan "Il veneziano"', 53; Emrah Safa Gürkan, 'My Money or Your Life: The Habsburg Hunt for Uluc Ali', *Studia Historica: Historia Moderna*, 36 (2014), 121–45; Gürkan, 'Espionage', 293–4., 369–70. Although Gürkan indicates that the names of these individuals are generally given in the sources, he rarely mentions them.

⁵³ Robert C. Davis, 'Counting European Slaves on the Barbary Coast', *Past and Present*, 172 (2001), 87–124, esp. table 1 on pp. 91–3, which makes it clear that the Italian coast was the most

to Italy's greater geographic proximity to North Africa and the ransoming networks operated by religious orders and states such as Venice, Italian captives may also have stood much better chances of being ransomed than individuals of other origins.⁵⁴

The prominence of co-nationals, in the early modern sense of the word, in North African maritime households, in fact, seems to have been a more general phenomenon. On the basis of the observations made by the Dutch consul in North Africa, Cornelis Pijnacker, in the mid-1620s, Maartje van Gelder has shown 'that Dutchmen serving in Barbary actively recruited followers among their compatriots'. A certain Murad Re'is (Jan Jansz) from Haarlem, for instance, was known to have actively promoted conversion to Islam among his Christian slaves, particularly if they were Dutch.⁵⁵ Although operating in the Maghreb almost a century before Murad Re'is, it is plausible that Uluç Ali likewise made an effort to surround himself with individuals of similar geographic and linguistic backgrounds.

In the naval context, such an active recruitment strategy makes sense for more than simply sentimental reasons. Naval skills were in chronically short supply throughout the Mediterranean. In fact, the Battle of Lepanto dealt a heavy blow to the Ottoman navy not so much because of the destruction of vessels, which in any case were quickly replaced during Uluç Ali's tenure as *kapudan paşa*, but because of the deaths of skilled seamen who were infinitely more difficult to replace.⁵⁶ In the sixteenth century, Mediterranean shipping was dominated by vessels such as galleys and the smaller galleasses which, although they had sails, were mainly propelled by oars. The necessary expertise to sail and navigate—as well as build and maintain—such ships was largely concentrated in the Aegean and along the coast of Italy. Singling out Italian speakers for recruitment, for example into a corsairing household, therefore, was a mechanism for ensuring access to the necessary skills.⁵⁷ As North African corsairs and pirates began adopting the smaller but faster sail-propelled ships in the seventeenth century, it made sense to adjust recruitment patterns accordingly. After all, the relevant know-how, as contemporaries knew very well, was no longer found in the countries bordering the Mediterranean,

preferred destination for slave raids; Sobers-Khan, *Slaves without Shackles*, 92; Bartolomé and Lucile Bennassar, *Les Chrétiens d'Allah: L'Histoire extraordinaire des renégats, XVI^e et XVII^e siècles* (Paris: Perrin, 1989), 149–65.

⁵⁴ Robert C. Davis, *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters: White Slavery in the Mediterranean, the Barbary Coast, and Italy, 1500–1800* (pbk edn, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 19–21; Davis, 'Counting European Slaves', 113–15.

⁵⁵ Maartje van Gelder, '“Een verlochend Christen [is] een quaetsten Mahumetaen”: Nederlandse renegaten in beeldvorming en praktijk', in Joost C. A. Schokkenbroek and Jeroen ter Brugge (eds), *Kapers & piraten: Schurken of helden?* (Jaarboek Maritieme Musea Nederland; Rotterdam: Stichting Maritiem Museum Rotterdam, 2010), 51–2, quotation from p. 52; Alexander H. de Groot, 'Ottoman North Africa and the Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *Revue de L'Occident Musulman et de La Méditerranée*, 39 (1985), 131–2; Bennassar and Bennassar, *Chrétiens d'Allah*, 33–4.

⁵⁶ John Francis Guilmartin, Jr., *Gunpowder and Galleys: Changing Technology and Mediterranean Warfare at Sea in the Sixteenth Century* (1st edn, Cambridge Studies in Early Modern History; Cambridge: CUP, 1974), 235, 251–2.

⁵⁷ Guilmartin, *Gunpowder and Galleys*, 97, 99, 132–4; Sobers-Khan, *Slaves without Shackles*, 96–8, 156–68; Bartolomé Bennassar, 'Les Chrétiens convertis à l'Islam: "Renégats" et leur intégration aux XVI^e et XVII^e siècles', *Les Cahiers de Tunisie*, 44/157–8 (1991), 49–50.

but on the Atlantic seaboard, notably the Netherlands and England.⁵⁸ For this reason, the seventeenth-century Scottish traveller William Lithgow could claim, in a passage which reeks of the kind of European chauvinism that would become widespread only much later,

if it were not for our Christian Runnagates, French, English, and Flemings . . . who have taught the Turkes the art of navigation, and especially the use of munition; which they both cast to them, & then become their chief Cannoneers; the Turks would be as weak and ignorant at sea, as the silly Æthiopian is unexpert in handling of Arms on the Land.⁵⁹

Lithgow's perception of a technological gap was shared by Maghrebi commentators like the Morisco Ahmad ibn Ghanim and his Arabic translator Ahmad ibn Qasim who explicitly advocated the adoption of military technologies developed in Christian Europe, chiefly among them cannons. This advocacy, as Ibn Ghanim knew very well, addressed specifically Maghrebi conditions, rather than the situation in the Ottoman Empire at large. Indeed, the Ottomans' use of gunpowder technology was cited as the crucial precedent and example to follow.⁶⁰ While the pleas for greater efforts in the adoption of cannons was not followed up with the rigour for which Ibn Ghanim and Ibn Qasim had hoped, the practice of seeking out Italians, in Uluç Ali's case, or Dutchmen, in Murad Re'is's, in all probability reflects conscious efforts to tap into the geographically specific distribution of naval expertise.

In contrast to Cığalazade's career in which his Italian origins as well as the knowledge and skill sets which they implied initially played a marginal role at best, for Uluç Ali, Uluç Hasan, and other members of Ali's household, their relevance to their patrons and ultimately the Ottoman state rested on their very backgrounds. Having said this, Lithgow's comments about Ottoman reliance on Christian-European technical expertise should be treated with caution. For one, the reliance of the Ottoman Empire on foreign experts prior to the self-consciously modernizing programmes introduced by Selim III and Mahmud II in the late eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries has often been overstated.⁶¹ To the extent to which such experts were employed, Gábor Ágoston has convincingly argued that the

⁵⁸ White, 'Catch and Release', 5–6, 21–2; Groot, 'Ottoman North Africa and the Dutch Republic', 131–2; Bennassar and Bennassar, *Chrétiens d'Allah*, 33; E. Natalie Rothman, 'Self-Fashioning in the Mediterranean Contact Zone: Giovanni Battista Salvago and His *Africa Overo Barbaria* (1625)', in Konrad Eisenbichler (ed.), *Renaissance Medievalisms* (Essays and Studies, 18; Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2009), 131–2.

⁵⁹ William Lithgow, *The Totall Discourse, of the Rare Adventures, and Painefull Peregrinations of Long Nineteene Yeares Travailes from Scotland, to the Most Famous Kingdomes in Europe, Asia, and Affrica* (London, 1640), 188–9.

⁶⁰ See the discussion of Ahmad Ibn Ghanim's work and Maghrebi conditions in Nabil I. Matar, *Europe through Arab Eyes, 1578–1727* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 126–33.

⁶¹ The classical exposition of this view is Bernard Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe* (pbk edn, London: Phoenix, 2000), ch. 9. For the reign of Selim III, Pascal Firges has shown that Ottoman demand for foreign experts was significantly lower than the supply offered by Revolutionary France. See Firges, 'Gunners for the Sultan: French Revolutionary Efforts to Modernize the Ottoman Military', in Firges et al. (eds), *Well-Connected Domains: Towards an Entangled Ottoman History* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 57; Leiden: Brill 2014), 183.

Ottomans, like Russia, Spain, or Sweden, simply tapped into existing mechanisms for the diffusion of military and technological innovations to get domestic industries going. In this context, renegades were at least as likely to simply identify and help recruit experts abroad as to provide the relevant skills themselves.⁶² My sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century sources, in fact, only identify five renegades as potential technical experts: Adam Neuser and the 'necromancer' Marco for their technical speculations; Oswald Kayser/Mahmud, a clockmaker from Graz who was employed to look after the sultan's clocks; a German-born director of the imperial armoury (*tophane-i 'amire*); and a goldsmith who, according to Reinhold Lubenau, had come to Istanbul with the Imperial ambassador Friedrich Preiner and advised Doğançlı Mehmed Paşa, Mehmed III's favourite and then the *beylerbeyi* of Rumelia, to debase the *akçe* by reducing its silver content. This debasement fed into the revolt of the janissaries in the capital which became known as the Beylerbeyi Incident of 1589. Of these three, only the clockmaker is confirmed as a technical expert by sources other than Gerlach and Lubenau. It is doubtful that the Ottomans required the advice of a German-trained goldsmith on monetary policy, even though Gerlach reports that Neuser, too, had undertaken experiments in reducing the bullion content in Ottoman and Christian-European coins.⁶³

Christian-European converts to Islam built more obviously on skills acquired prior to conversion when they worked as interpreters. Historians have long noted the numerical prominence of renegades among the so-called dragomans of the Porte, the corps of court interpreters, for most of the sixteenth century and in particular the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent.⁶⁴ Their duties bestowed great importance and influence on them since their translations could have decisive

⁶² Gábor Ágoston, *Guns for the Sultan: Military Power and the Weapons Industry in the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: CUP, 2005), 42–60, 192–5.

⁶³ On Neuser's technical speculations, see Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 285; Martin Mulsow, 'Fluchträume und Konversionsräume zwischen Heidelberg und Istanbul: Der Fall Adam Neuser', in Mulsow (ed.), *Kriminelle—Freidenker—Alchemisten* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2014), 58; Mulsow, 'Adam Neusers Brief an Sultan Selim II. und seine geplante Rechtfertigungsschrift: Eine Rekonstruktion anhand neuer Manuskriptfunde', in Friedrich Vollhardt (ed.), *Religiöser Nonkonformismus und frühneuzeitliche Gelehrtenkultur* (Quellen und Darstellungen zur Geschichte des Antitrinitarismus und Sozinianismus in der Frühen Neuzeit, 2; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2014), 311; Christopher J. Burchill, *The Heidelberg Antitrinitarians: Johann Sylvan, Adam Neuser, Matthias Vehe, Jacob Suter, Johann Hasler* (Bibliotheca Dissidentium: Répertoire des non-conformistes religieux ses seizième et dix-septième siècles, 11; Baden-Baden: Koerner, 1989), 124 interprets Neuser's activity as counterfeiting. Marco's interests are reported in HHStA, Türkei I, box 32, bundle for 1576 Jan.–Apr., fos. 225^r–232^r (Ungnad to Maximilian II, Constantinople, 2 Apr. 1576), at fo. 230^v, quotation from this folio. On Oswald Kayser/Mahmud, see Müller, *Franken im Osten*, 230–1; Müller, *Prosopographie*, iv.397–9; HHStA, Türkei I, box 31, bundle for 1575 Mar., fos. 139^r–143^v (Ungnad to Maximilian II, Constantinople, 30 Mar. 1575), at fo. 142^v; Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 52. The director of the imperial armoury appears in Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 127–8. For the goldsmith, see *Beschreibung der Reisen des Reinhold Lubenau*, ed. W. Sahm, 2 vols (Königsberg in Prussia: Beyer, 1914–15), ii.43. Günhan Börekçi is currently preparing an in-depth study of the Beylerbeyi Incident. A brief account is also contained in Börekçi, 'Factions and Favorites', 44.

⁶⁴ Matuz, 'Pfortendolmetscher'; Emrah Safa Gürkan, 'Mediating Boundaries: Mediterranean Go-Betweens and Cross-Confessional Diplomacy in Constantinople, 1560–1600', in Maartje van Gelder and Tijana Krstić (eds), 'Cross-Confessional Diplomacy', special issue, *Journal of Early Modern History*, 19/2–3 (2015), 112 n. 15.

influence on the course of diplomatic relations. The potential impact of the choice of words in translation becomes evident, for example, from a dispute between the Imperial ambassador Friedrich von Kreckwitz and Grand Vizier Koca Sinan Paşa in February 1593 when the former complained bitterly about the use of the word *tribute* in relation to the annual payments from the Habsburgs to the Ottomans stipulated in the Treaty of Edirne. In the Habsburgs' eyes, these payments were merely 'honourable presents'. Kreckwitz attributed the word choice to the grand vizier, ostensibly as part of a calculated provocation, who also suggested that the dispute could be resolved by altering the translation while leaving the Ottoman Turkish original untouched. In this particular instance, the dragoman refused. Such a heightened sense of professional integrity was probably rare.⁶⁵

Employing native speakers of Christian-European languages as translators—who were familiar not only with the various languages and their quirks but also the kinds of cultural specificities which are nearly impossible to fully grasp by non-native speakers unless they have had the chance to immerse themselves in the language and its cultural contexts for considerable time—is self-evidently sensible although one must be careful about the conclusions which one draws from these employments. By no means was it the case, as some historians have asserted, that the Ottoman Empire depended on renegades for its expertise of Christian-European languages or that Muslims were disinterested in the world outside the borders of the *darūlislām* (Arabic: *dār al-islām*), the territories under Muslim rule.⁶⁶ Relevant language skills were also available, for example, from the Empire's own multiethnic and, more importantly, multilingual inhabitants, including Jewish and Morisco refugees. In fact, Christian-European diplomats like the Imperial ambassadors themselves generally recruited their own translators from among the Italian-speaking population of the former Genoese colony of Galata (now Beyoğlu in Istanbul). For some time, Venice was exceptional in training its own subjects, the *giovane della lingua*, in a school specifically established for that purpose at the Venetian embassy. The Habsburgs experimented with a similar idea in the late sixteenth century. But even when Rudolf II explicitly pledged to support four boys with up to 65 *Talers per annum* each for the purpose of learning Turkish, only two of them were to be Habsburg subjects; the other two were to be recruited from among the Christians of Galata.⁶⁷

In the eyes of an imperial administration which, by the sixteenth century, had become increasingly religiously exclusive, renegade interpreters did, however, have one crucial advantage over the Empire's non-Muslim subjects, no matter how good

⁶⁵ HHStA, Türkei I, box 79, bundle for 1593 Jan.–Feb., fos. 168^r–190^v (Friedrich von Kreckwitz to Archduke Matthias, Constantinople, 19 Feb. 1593), at fos. 181^v–182^v; Gürkan, 'Mediating Boundaries', 115.

⁶⁶ This claim underlies much of Bernard Lewis' scholarship, particularly his *Muslim Discovery*. See also Müller, *Franken im Osten*, 272–3. For a detailed critique of historical writing which has followed this assumption, see the introduction to Nabil I. Matar (tr. and ed.), *In the Lands of the Christians: Arabic Travel Writing in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

⁶⁷ KA, AFA, box 30, file 1589/12/2, fo. 544^r–^v (Rudolf II to the Aulic War Councillors, Prague, 20 Dec. 1589), at fo. 544^r. See also Cécile Balbous, *Das Sprachknaben-Institut der Habsburgermonarchie in Konstantinopel* (Berlin: Frank und Timme, 2015), esp. 48–9, 56–7, as well as the literature cited there.

their language skills may have been: they were directly employable in offices of state. This is of particular importance in the context of diplomatic missions abroad. Unlike many of its Christian-European neighbours, the Ottomans famously did not maintain resident ambassadors at other rulers' courts but instead dispatched special envoys whenever it was deemed necessary. These envoys were at times dragomans of the Porte like Mahmud Bey who was repeatedly dispatched by the Sublime Porte on diplomatic missions to France, Poland, Transylvania, Venice, and Vienna during his career. Mahmud had been born in the Habsburg capital but had been captured by Ottoman forces during the Battle of Mohács in 1526. After his conversion, he had probably been educated in the palace school and, by the 1540s, had begun working as a dragoman. In 1575, he died in Prague where he had been sent to deliver the recently ratified peace treaty between Ottomans and Habsburgs to Emperor Rudolf II.⁶⁸ In their diplomatic functions, there seems to have been a certain overlap between the dragomans of the Porte and *çavuşs*, members of a special military unit which acted as couriers for sultanic commands within the Empire but also delivered letters written by the sultan to other monarchs and accompanied foreign diplomats from the borders of the Ottoman Empire to the capital and back again. That there was a measure of dependency between the two corps is suggested by the fact that one of Mahmud Bey's clients, the renegade Markus Penckner (Ahmed Bey) is described as a *çavuş* in Michael Heberer's memoirs of his stay in the Ottoman Empire, a position which he probably obtained because of Mahmud's patronage.⁶⁹ Individuals like Mahmud Bey and other dragomans were usually far more than merely passive messengers and linguistic intermediaries. Their ability to bridge the language gap between Ottoman officials and Christian-European diplomats put them in a powerful position to influence and shape the course of negotiations. The close involvement of the dragoman of the Porte Hürrem Bey in the negotiations for a truce between Spain and the Ottoman Empire undertaken in 1577–81 is a case in point.⁷⁰

But official interpreters were, of course, not the only ones to act as diplomatic intermediaries. Maartje van Gelder, for instance, has drawn attention to the importance of renegade corsairs of Dutch origins in establishing and maintaining diplomatic and consular links between the United Provinces, Morocco, and the

⁶⁸ Tijana Krstić, 'Of Translation and Empire: Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Imperial Interpreters as Renaissance Go-Betweens', in Woodhead (ed.), *Ottoman World*, 134; Pál Ács, 'Tarjumans Mahmud and Murad: Austrian and Hungarian Renegades as Sultan's Interpreters', in Bodo Guthmüller and Wilhelm Kühlmann (eds), *Europa und die Türken in der Renaissance* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2000), 308–9; Ernst D. Petritsch, 'Der babsburgisch-osmanische Friedensvertrag des Jahres 1547', *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs*, 38 (1985), 60–6; Matuz, 'Pfortendolmetscher', 49–51. For Mahmud's death, see also HHStA, Türkei I, box 31, bundle for 1575 Apr., fos. 162^v–163^v ('De Morbi [sic] ac Mores [sic] genere D. legati Imp. Turcoru[m] brevis narratio').

⁶⁹ Michael Heberer, *Aegyptiaca servitus* (Heidelberg, 1610), 348–9.

⁷⁰ Gürkan, 'Mediating Boundaries', 112, 114, and 119; Gürkan, 'Espionage', 291–313; Maria José Rodríguez-Salgado, 'From the Ridiculous to the Sublime: The Origins of the Hispano-Ottoman "Peace" of the 1570s and 1580s', paper given at the workshop 'Cross-Confessional Diplomacy and Diplomatic Mediators in the Early Modern Mediterranean', Budapest, 24–7 May 2012.

semi-independent regencies of Algiers and Tunis.⁷¹ And while the Italian origins of Ottoman admirals such as Uluç Ali, Uluç Hasan, and Cığalazade Yusuf Sinan may have facilitated direct communication especially with the Venetian *baili*, rather than the officials themselves, members of their households would usually act as go-betweens.⁷² This was true of other high-ranking members of the Ottoman elite as well. At the height of the diplomatic crisis which eventually led to the outbreak of war with the Austrian Habsburgs in July 1593, the crucial intermediaries were Benedetto Bruti, an Albanian Christian with close ties to Koca Sinan Paşa, and a certain Hasan Ağa (often referred to as Hasan Calabrese), an Italian renegade who served Koca Sinan's son Sinanpaşazade Mehmed Paşa.⁷³ At other times, similar functions were performed by Jewish physicians and advisers like Solomon Ashkenazi, Moses Benveniste, and David Passi. Alongside dragomans and *cavuşs*, such individuals were agents primarily of the vivid unofficial diplomacy which paved the way for formal audiences and agreements that, in turn, might lead to treaties and the dispatch of an official Ottoman envoy.⁷⁴

INTELLIGENCE AND (DIS)INFORMATION

The ability to send native speakers on such diplomatic missions abroad was advantageous for another vital, if often neglected aspect of 'international' relations: intelligence. It certainly was no coincidence that Ramazan Çavuş who accompanied several Imperial ambassadors to Istanbul had been born in Augsburg. His language skills would at least have enabled him to interview locals as well as the members of the embassy.⁷⁵ Moreover, during Mahmud Bey's negotiations with Ferdinand I in Vienna in 1550, the Ottoman interpreter actively spied on Ferdinand's ties with

⁷¹ Maartje van Gelder, 'The Republic's Renegades: Dutch Converts to Islam in Seventeenth-Century Diplomatic Relations with North Africa', in Gelder and Krstić (eds), 'Cross-Confessional Diplomacy', 175–98; Gelder, 'Een verlochend Christen', 53–4.

⁷² Gürkan, 'Mediating Boundaries', 124.

⁷³ Noel Malcolm, *Agents of Empire: Knights, Corsairs, Jesuits and Spies in the Sixteenth-Century Mediterranean World* (London: Lane, 2015), 395–7. Bruti was the more important intermediary by far and therefore appears in every single letter written by Kreckwitz between 12 May and 19 June 1593. Hasan's role is mentioned in HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for 1593 May–June, fos. 57^r–63^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 22. May 1593), at fos. 57^r, 59^v–^r; fos. 111a^r–^v and 112^r–120^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 1 June 1593), at fos. 111a^v, 115^v, 116^v; fos. 127^r–130^v, 133^r–134^v, 131^r–^v, 135^r–^v, and 138^r–140^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 7 June 1593), at fos. 129^r, 134^v, 131^r–^v, 135^r; fos. 220^r–227^v and 253^r–^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 19 June 1593), at fos. 221^r–223^r.

⁷⁴ Emrah Safa Gürkan, 'Touting for Patrons, Brokering Power, and Trading Information: Trans-Imperial Jews in Sixteenth-Century Istanbul', in Emilio Sola Castaño and Gennaro Varriale (eds), *Detrás de las apariencias: Información y espionaje (siglos XVI–XVII)* (Alcalá de Henares: Universidad de Alcalá, 2015), 144–9; Gürkan, 'Mediating Boundaries', esp. 116–20, 126–8; Benjamin Arbel, *Trading Nations: Jews and Venetians in the Early Modern Eastern Mediterranean* (Brill's Series in Jewish Studies, 14; Leiden: Brill, 1995), esp. ch. 4; Cecil Roth, 'Dr. Solomon Ashkenazi and the Election to the Throne of Poland, 1574–5', *Oxford Slavonic Papers*, 9 (1960), 8–20; Suraiya N. Faruqi, 'Ein Günstling des osmanischen Sultans Murad III.: David Passi', *Der Islam*, 47 (1971), 290–7.

⁷⁵ Václav Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures of Baron Wenceslas Wratislav of Mitrowitz*, tr. A. H. Wratislav (London: Bell and Daldy, 1862), 38–9; HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for

György Martinuzzi who, by then, was advocating a Habsburg–Transylvanian alliance against the Ottoman Empire.⁷⁶ In this respect, at least, Ottoman envoys differed little from their Christian-European counterparts who likewise engaged in intelligence gathering and even outright espionage. The Austrian Habsburgs' intelligence operations in Istanbul, for instance, were supervised, directed, and coordinated by the Imperial ambassador *ex officio*.⁷⁷ At least as important as language skills in such matters, however, was the social capital provided by 'relatives and acquaintances'.⁷⁸

Ottoman diplomats, of course, were not the only ones to engage in espionage and intelligence gathering. In August 1592, for example, Friedrich von Kreckwitz sent a disquieting warning from Istanbul to Vienna:

I have received reliable reports from secret sources that a Portuguese Jew, who has recently become a Turk in order to please Hoca [Sadeddin Efendi], is travelling aboard an Ottoman vessel which left for Venice a few days ago. These same sources have informed me that he is to travel further towards His Majesty's residences in Prague and Vienna by unknown means in order to scout and betray the country's terrain, distances, and armaments.⁷⁹

The reports of such a scouting mission of the Habsburgs' lands bordering the Ottoman Empire were particularly alarming since, only a fortnight ago, news had reached the Ottoman capital that the *beylerbeyi* of Bosnia, Hasan Paşa Predojević, had conquered the important fortress of Bihać (German: Wihitsch) in Habsburg Croatia. This military victory, which clearly violated the recently renewed peace treaty, further aggravated tensions between the two early modern empires created by repeated raids across the frontier by small parties on both sides, disagreement over the exchange of prisoners, and the Habsburgs' delay of the 'honourable present'.⁸⁰ The choice of a native Portuguese for this mission seems curious since there is nothing to indicate a particularly good command of German, Czech, and

1593 Mar.–Apr., fos. 108^r–116^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 8 Apr. 1593), at fo. 115^r; Müller, *Prosopographie*, vi.351–3.

⁷⁶ Ács, 'Tarjumans Mahmud and Murad', 311; Petritsch, 'Friedensvertrag', 63–4.

⁷⁷ Compare Garrett Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (London: Cape, 1955), 113–15, 241–7, 259–61. For a discussion of Austrian-Habsburg intelligence in Istanbul, see Chapter 5, section 'Renegades and Austrian-Habsburg Intelligence'.

⁷⁸ Ágoston, 'Information', 90.

⁷⁹ KA, IÖHKR, Croatica, box 4, file 1592/10/119, fos. 3^r–78^v (Kreckwitz to Archduke Ernst, Constantinople, 8 Aug. 1592), at fos. 74^v–75^r.

⁸⁰ On Kreckwitz learning of the conquest of Bihać and his reaction to it see HHStA, Türkei I, box 78, bundle for 1592 July–Aug., fos. 40^r–41^v (Kreckwitz to Ernst, Constantinople, 25 July 1592). The background to the crisis is summarized in Gustav Bayerle (ed.), *Ottoman Diplomacy in Hungary: Letters from the Pashas of Buda 1590–1593* (Indiana University Publications Uralic and Altaic Series; Bloomington: Indiana University, 1972), 3, 8–10; Dorothy Margaret Vaughan, *Europe and the Turk: A Pattern of Alliances, 1350–1700* (Liverpool: LUP, 1976), 180–3; Gunther Erich Rothenberg, *The Austrian Military Border in Croatia, 1522–1747* (Illinois Studies in the Social Sciences, 48; Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1960), 52–8; Jan Paul Niederkorn, *Die europäischen Mächte und der 'Lange Türkenkrieg' Kaiser Rudolfs II. (1593–1606)* (Archiv für österreichische Geschichte, 135; Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1993), 9–10; Malcolm, *Agents of Empire*, 391–8.

Hungarian, the three dominant languages in the regions about which information was to be obtained. What must have mattered more, in this case, would have been his contacts to various European Jewish communities which were deeply connected by ties of trade and finance. For this reason, the names most frequently connected with Ottoman efforts to obtain intelligence on Christian Europe are those of Jews like Joseph Nasi, David Passi, Alvaro Mendes, and Solomon Ashkenazi. Although in all four cases their prowess in collecting information abroad and their ability to organize sabotage operations have usually been exaggerated by contemporaries and later historians alike, their linguistic expertise, migration experience, and embeddedness in networks of trade and communications spanning the Mediterranean and beyond made them ideal for providing the Porte with information about developments abroad.⁸¹ Their involvement 'in secret matters', moreover, may reflect the general attitude prevalent in Christian Europe that Jews possessed particular competence in the arcane and occult, an attitude that would naturally have extended to those who were known to have abandoned Judaism.⁸²

This is not to say that converts from Christianity did not provide intelligence to the Ottomans. In 1575, Markus Penckner prepared for the ultimately abortive penetration of the Spanish court. Like the 'Jewish Turk' dispatched to Vienna in 1592, Penckner, too, seems like a rather unlikely candidate for such a mission in light of the fact that his native language was German and that, prior to embracing Islam, he had been a radical Protestant who had denied the doctrine of the Trinity.⁸³ However, David Ungnad, to whose investigative prowess we owe much of the information on Penckner's undertaking, knew that the man had 'good language skills' which made him eminently suitable for reconnaissance abroad. 'His Italian, Hungarian, German, and Wallachian are perfect', the diplomat reported in June 1575, 'and he knows so much Turkish that now he can even converse with [Grand Vizier Sokollu] Mehmed Paşa himself upon important matters'.⁸⁴ The ambassador's description thus conveys the sense of a man who had a gift for languages and who seemed to pick up new ones quickly. It is not impossible that Philip II of Spain would have believed Penckner's cover. The latter

⁸¹ Gürkan, 'Touting for Patrons'; Gürkan, 'Espionage', 377–87; Ágoston, 'Information', 82–3; Arbel, *Trading Nations*, 56–61; Elif Özgen, 'The Connected World of Intrigues: The Disgrace of Murad III's Favourite David Passi in 1591', *Leidschrift*, 27 (2012), 75–100; Faroqhi, 'Günstling'; Müller, *Franken im Osten*, 201–6; Eric R. Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 111.

⁸² Daniel Jütte, *Das Zeitalter des Geheimnisses: Juden, Christen und die Ökonomie des Geheimen (1400–1800)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2011), 19. Quotation here from HHStA, Türkei I, box 43, bundle for 1580 Nov.–Dec. and n.d., fo. 255^r ('Extract aus H[er]rn von Sinzendorff Schreiben', [Vienna?], [1580]).

⁸³ Müller, *Franken im Osten*, 217; Müller, *Prosopographie*, vii.153, 155. Quotation from IÖHKR, Croatica, box 4, file 1592/10/119, fos. 3^r–78^v (Kreckwitz to Ernst, Constantinople, 8 Aug. 1592), at fo. 75^r.

⁸⁴ HHStA, Türkei I, box 31, bundle for 1575 May–June, fos. 64^r–73^v (Ungnad to Maximilian II, Constantinople, 6 June 1575), at fo. 69^v. Evidence of Penckner's knowledge of Italian is also provided by HHStA, Polen I, box 84, fo. 113^r–^v (Markus Penckner to anonymous, Constantinople, 23 Mar. 1573).

was certainly no more—or less, for that matter—flamboyant than many other individuals on whom the Spanish king relied for intelligence from the Ottoman Empire.⁸⁵

The value of converts to Islam of Christian-European backgrounds for intelligence—its gathering as well as its analysis—also offers another, complementary rather than alternative, explanation for the kind of ethnic clustering observed in Uluç Ali's household. For Ottoman corsairs and pirates operating in the Western Mediterranean as well as the *kapudan paşas*, men who knew Italy, spoke Italian, and had contacts in the peninsula were important for the identification of suitable targets and for obtaining information about the naval activities of Venice as well as the Ottomans' main rival in the Mediterranean, Spain, whose fleet operated out of Naples, Sicily, and Genoa.⁸⁶ Unlike these two states, the Ottoman Empire—true to the patrimonial model—undertook little effort to centrally coordinate intelligence-gathering activities. Rather, obtaining information was largely left to individual office holders, even if sultanic commands expressly instructed high-ranking officials and vassal princes to provide Istanbul with information on specific issues or developments in particular regions. In this context, the ability of such officials to develop intelligence capabilities within their own households was not only vital for successful conduct in office but also became a resource to be deployed in personal and factional rivalries for offices, honours, and policy. Such jockeying naturally included a great deal of misinformation directed at the Porte, as Emrah Safa Gürkan has shown in the case of the efforts of what he calls the Mediterranean faction headed by Uluç Ali to obtain permission and resources for a naval campaign against the Spanish Habsburgs in the mid-1580s.⁸⁷

A similar situation manifested itself in 1593 between those on the sultan's council who were in favour of going to war with the Habsburgs and those who advocated a diplomatic resolution to the conflict. In this struggle, Koca Sinan Paşa, who had replaced Kanijeli Siavuş Paşa as grand vizier in January, eagerly seized on the opportunity presented by the conversion to Islam of the Imperial ambassador's steward Ladislaus Mörth. On the evening of 1 May, Mörth returned to the embassy with a group of *çavuşs* and demanded entrance into the building. According to Kreckwitz, they had come with orders for him 'to hand over at once all documents presently held in the residence'. When the ambassador responded that he did not keep any 'secret letters' but instead 'burn[ed] them as soon as I had understood his Majesty's intentions or sent him my most obedient reply', the party began

⁸⁵ For a description of some of these contemporary characters, see Emrah Safa Gürkan, 'The Efficacy of Ottoman Counter-Intelligence in the 16th Century', *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 65 (2012), 1–38; Gürkan, 'Espionage', esp. ch. 5. Compare Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard Wiegers, *A Man of Three Worlds: Samuel Pallache, a Moroccan Jew in Catholic and Protestant Europe*, tr. Martin Beagles (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 97–9.

⁸⁶ Gürkan, 'Espionage', 356–61, 368–70; Gürkan, 'Fooling the Sultan'; Davis, *Christian Slaves*, 42–3.

⁸⁷ Gürkan, 'Fooling the Sultan'; Gürkan, 'Espionage', ch. 6; Elif Özgen, 'Grand Vizier Koca Sinan Paşa and Factional Politics in the Court of Murad III', MA thesis, Istanbul Bilgi University, 2010; Özgen, 'Connected World of Intrigues'.

searching the embassy building. Due to a fatal oversight of the embassy's secretary, Mörtz was able to find part of the ambassador's protocol. The *çavuş* also confiscated a number of other papers, including the beginning of the very letter in which Kreckwitz reported the search of the *elçi han*, which had already been transcribed into cipher.⁸⁸ In light of the already strained relations between Ottomans and Habsburgs, the confiscation of such 'secret writings' potentially posed a serious danger. Kreckwitz consequently emphasized in a letter written to the archduke two days after the search that he and everyone belonging to his household had been 'in the highest danger'.⁸⁹

This evaluation was shared by Archduke Matthias who warned his brother Emperor Rudolf II on 11 June about the consequences which the translation of the confiscated documents would have for communications between Istanbul and Vienna as well as Habsburg intelligence operations in the Ottoman capital.⁹⁰ Kreckwitz's letter of 8 April 1593, for example, while careful not to name the exact sources of information, contained intimate information concerning secret orders sent from the Porte to its commanders on the frontier which would surely have made it clear enough to the Ottomans that they had a dangerous leak.⁹¹ Koca Sinan Paşa had already had the embassy's dragoman Matthia del Faro, a Galata Christian, arrested some time before the search of the embassy because he suspected him of espionage. This mistrust was justified since del Faro had some experience in such matters. In 1576, he had married a daughter of the Spaniards' master spy Aurelio Santa Croce and, as Gürkan has noted, subsequently 'contributed to the efficiency of the [Spanish-]Habsburg intelligence network' in the Ottoman Empire, at least during the mid-1570s.⁹² If the papers captured on 1 May included the report of 12 February, they would clearly have implicated the dragoman Matthia del Faro in further espionage activity against the Ottoman Empire, this time on behalf of the Holy Roman Emperor, and along with him the Venetian *bailo* who had agreed to forward del Faro's intelligence reports via Venice, using Venetian ciphers, in the event that the embassy were locked up.⁹³ Archduke Matthias seems to have had this arrangement in mind when he pointed out that 'also the Venetian

⁸⁸ HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for 1593 May–June, fos. 2^r–8^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 2 May 1593), at fos. 5^v–7^r; Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Adventures*, 111–15; Friedrich Seidel, *Denkwürdige Gesandtschaft an die Ottomannische Pforte, Welche ehmahls auf Röm. Kays. Maj. Rudolphi II. Hohen Befehl Herr Fridrich von Kreckwitz . . . verrichtet* (Görlitz, 1711), 17–21.

⁸⁹ HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for 1593 May–June, fos. 27^r–30^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 4 May 1593), at fo. 27^r.

⁹⁰ KA, AFA, box 32, file 1593/6/1/4, unfoliated (Matthias to Rudolf II, Vienna, 11 June 1593), at leaves 3^v–4^r.

⁹¹ HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for 1593 Mar.–Apr., fos. 108^r–116^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 8 Apr. 1593), esp. at fo. 109^r–v.

⁹² Gürkan, 'Espionage', 182–3, 269, 282, and 294, quotation from p. 182. Del Faro's wedding is described by Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 155–7, who attended it as a guest. See also Malcolm, *Agents of Empire*, 233; Müller, *Franken im Osten*, 490–1; Müller, *Prosopographie*, ii.354–6.

⁹³ HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for 1593 Jan.–Feb., fos. 168^r–190^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 19 Feb. 1593), at fo. 179^v.

bailo, our spies and informants, and everyone who is well-disposed towards the ambassador's house will be in the uttermost danger of life'.⁹⁴

Mörth's work had every potential to provide an intelligence windfall for the Ottomans. As both Matthias and Kreckwitz realized, the Ottomans' access to enciphered material presented a danger to the security of communications between Vienna and the ambassador. Consequently, both men advised, independently of one another, that the ciphers be changed.⁹⁵ In the end, such advice was overtaken by the rapid deterioration of the situation which rendered any attempts to replace the diplomatic ciphers redundant as Kreckwitz was arrested at the outbreak of war and forced to accompany Koca Sinan Paşa, who had been appointed *serdar*, to the front. Following his imprisonment in Belgrade, the ambassador died sometime during the winter, effectively capping the flow of intelligence from the Ottoman capital.⁹⁶

In any case, there is no evidence that Mörth's defection to the Ottomans and the finds among the ambassador's papers provided as much of a boon to Ottoman counter-intelligence and cryptanalysis as Archduke Matthias and Ambassador Kreckwitz had feared. Ladislaus Mörth clearly had not been instructed in Habsburg chancery practice, let alone the handling of ciphers, and therefore lacked the knowledge and experience to actually decipher (as opposed to decrypting) the ambassador's letters himself. Other renegades such as Colombina, who converted to Islam in the 1560s, however, did bring a measure of cryptological knowledge with them. Colombina was a Venetian subject who had been sent to Istanbul for training as a *giovane della lingua*. In the course of his apprenticeship, he 'should have seen and perhaps even helped the Venetian scribes in [the] Bailo's house decipher letters', a skill which made him instrumental in Ottoman efforts to break Bailo Vettore Bragadin's cipher in 1566. It is doubtful, however, whether Colombina's contribution to Ottoman cryptanalysis was of any lasting consequence. As Gürkan has pointed out, 'It is not hard to guess how efficient somebody like Colombina, who did not have a proper education but only learned a specific cipher by helping others use it, would be.'⁹⁷ Colombina's contemporary, the former Heidelberg theologian Adam Neuser, on the other hand, seems to have had a far greater store of cryptological expertise and, since he was highly educated, can be reasonably expected to have been somewhat more useful in this respect. The same

⁹⁴ KA, AFA, box 32, file 1593/6/¼, unfoliated (Matthias to Rudolf II, Vienna, 11 June 1593), at leaves 3^v–4^r.

⁹⁵ HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for 1593 May–June, fo. 54^r–^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 19 May 1593), at fo. 54^r; KA, AFA, box 32, file 1593/6/¼, unfoliated (Matthias to Rudolf II, Vienna, 11 June 1593), at leaf 11^r.

⁹⁶ Seidel, *Denckwürdige Gesandtschaft*, 28–33; Václav Vratislav z Mitrovic, *Des Freyherrn von Wratislaw merkwürdige Gesandtschafreise von Wien nach Konstantinopel: So gut als aus dem Englischen übersezt* (Leipzig, 1787), 276–7. On Kreckwitz's death, see TNA, SP 97/2, pt 2, fo. 265^r–^v (Barton to Burghley, Constantinople, 3/13 Mar. 1593), at fo. 265^v.

⁹⁷ Gürkan, 'Espionage', 86; Gürkan, 'Efficacy', 22; Dejanirah Cuoto, 'Spying in the Ottoman Empire: Sixteenth-Century Encrypted Correspondence', in Francisco Bethencourt and Florike Egmond (eds), *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe*, iii: *Correspondence and Cultural Exchange in Europe, 1400–1700* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), 301–2; Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople*, 138; Müller, *Prosopographie*, iii.145–6.

may be true of Marco who had accompanied Don Francisco Torellas and whose occult knowledge might well have encompassed cryptology.⁹⁸

Still, what little we know of the Ottomans' use of ciphers and their abilities to break those used in the correspondence of rival and friendly states suggests that the Ottoman state had little interest in cryptology. As far as cryptanalysis is concerned, Gürkan has drawn the reasonable conclusion that, since Sokollu Mehmed Paşa repeatedly demanded the Venetian *bailo* to drop the use of ciphers and codes and even tried to have a clause prohibiting the use of such devices included in the capitulations with the Serenissima in the 1560s, the Ottomans had difficulties with cryptanalysis. After all, if the Ottomans had been able to decrypt the correspondence of the diplomats of Venice and other states, the grand vizier's attempts to stop ambassadors from using codes and ciphers would have been pointless from the perspective of Ottoman intelligence—unless it was intended as deception, an interpretation for which there is absolutely no evidence at present.⁹⁹ Having said this, the evidence of Ottoman successes and failures of cryptanalysis comes from a small selection of Christian-European sources, particularly the diary of Stephan Gerlach, and therefore provides shaky ground for overarching generalizations of Ottoman capabilities in this field. In particular, we cannot be certain that Sokollu's demands are representative of Ottoman elite attitudes towards the use of ciphers and codes more generally, rather than being the opinion of a single, albeit very powerful, individual. It would be too easy to generalize from this isolated evidence.

As far as Ladislaus Mörtz is concerned, however, the high-profile renegade was valued by Koca Sinan Paşa for other things than his potential contribution to Ottoman counter-intelligence and cryptanalysis. When the former steward presented his petition to Sultan Murad III shortly after his conversion to Islam, he emphasized his familiarity with the Habsburg border defences in Croatia. On that basis, the renegade offered to 'show Hasan Paşa [Predojević] a way to bring into his possession, without any hazard, Karlstadt, which still remains in Croatia and is a key to three countries'.¹⁰⁰

This offer is noteworthy not least because it explicitly invokes the *beylerbeyi* of Bosnia whose officially unsanctioned campaigns into Croatia had done so much to sour relations between the Porte and the Emperor. Clearly, Mörtz, like his former employer, considered Hasan to be acting with Murad III's blessing, an impression which was reinforced by rumours that the sultan had presented this provincial governor with a robe of honour and a sword in November 1592 because of his military successes against Habsburg strongholds like Bihać.¹⁰¹ Whether the renegade's proposal was indeed taken up is unknown. A siege, let alone a conquest of

⁹⁸ Mulsow, 'Neusers Brief', 306; HHStA, Türkei I, box 32, bundle for 1576 Jan.–Apr., fos. 225^r–232^v (Ungnad to Maximilian II, Constantinople, 2 Apr. 1576), at fos. 230^v–231^r.

⁹⁹ Gürkan, 'Espionage', 86–8, quotations from p. 87; Cuoto, 'Spying', 300–1.

¹⁰⁰ HHStA, Türkei I, box 81, bundle for 1593 July–Aug., fos. 210^r–^v and 214^r–^v ('Copi deren schriften so Ladislaus Marten zu Altenburg jetzo Alibeg genandt, in Constantinopel wid[er] I[hren] Oratorem Sulthano ubergeben', n.d.), at fo. 210^v.

¹⁰¹ HHStA, Türkei I, box 79, bundle for 1592 Oct.–Nov., fos. 27^r–29^v (Kreckwitz to Ernst, Constantinople, 28 Nov. 1592), at fo. 27^r–^v.

Karlovac features neither in the relevant Ottoman chronicles nor in any of the documents which I have consulted in Vienna. In any case, the main thrust of the Ottoman campaigns during this war was directed against Habsburg-held Hungary and the Danubian principalities, rather than Croatia, in a bid for the conquest of Vienna.¹⁰² According to Matteo Zane, Koca Sinan also consulted the renegade on at least two occasions after the outbreak of war in 1593 while preparing that year's campaigns concerning the defences of Royal Hungary and Venetian-ruled Croatia as well as the prospects of an Ottoman conquest of Vienna.¹⁰³

In spite of these reports, however, the actual significance of Mörth's contribution to Ottoman intelligence seems questionable. Rather, Mörth's immediate value in the diplomatic crisis which preceded the war concerned disinformation rather than intelligence. As early as 2 May, Kreckwitz had understood that the documents confiscated from the Imperial embassy's chancery 'were already being translated by the renegade [Mörth] from German into Italian and thence by other persons into Turkish'.¹⁰⁴ This two-tiered process of translation through Italian as the *lingua franca* of Mediterranean diplomacy in this period was the norm.¹⁰⁵ It also proves that Mörth's command of Turkish was not sufficient for this task and hence it is clear that he would have had help with writing the petition he submitted to the sultan at around the same time. When the eventual Turkish translation was submitted to Murad III sometime after 4 May, 'the sultan...in his initial anger...immediately ordered me and the dragoman [del Faro] to be executed'. According to Kreckwitz, the translation of the documents had been less than faithful:

The cursed renegade [Mörth] was not content with disclosing what was actually contained in [the bundle taken from me] and which was true, as Your Serenity [Archduke Matthias] graciously knows, but out of insatiable thirst for my blood he added many horrible fabrications, claiming that I had written to His Imperial Majesty that I was plotting to poison Sinan Paşa and, with the help of several renegades, put fire to Constantinople in many places, and especially the arsenal. Moreover, I had recommended and caused His Imperial Majesty [Rudolf II] to recall the two [honourable] presents, which had already been on their way here, and had advised Your Serenity that

¹⁰² This emerges clearly from the archival material preserved in Vienna, particularly the Kriegsarchiv's Alte Feldakten. See also Caroline Finkel, *The Administration of Warfare: The Ottoman Military Campaigns in Hungary, 1593–1606* (Beihefte zur Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, 14; Vienna: Verband der Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaften Österreichs, 1988), 11–20; Finkel, *Osman's Dream: The Story of the Ottoman Empire, 1300–1923* (London: Murray, 2006), 174–5; János J. Varga, 'Osmanische Pläne zur Teilung Ungarns im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert: Das politische Konstrukt *Orta Macar*', in Robert Born and Andreas Puth (eds), *Osmanischer Orient und Ostmitteleuropa: Perzeptionen und Interaktionen in den Grenzregionen zwischen dem 16. und 18. Jahrhundert* (Forschungen zur Geschichte und Kultur des östlichen Mitteleuropa, 48; Stuttgart: Steiner, 2014), 26–7.

¹⁰³ *CSP Venice*, ix.81–2, no. 189 (Matteo Zane to the Doge and Senate of Venice, Constantinople, 23 July 1593), at p. 82.

¹⁰⁴ HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for 1593 May–June, fos. 2r–8v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 2 May 1593), at fo. 7v.

¹⁰⁵ In fact, Italian remained central to Levantine diplomacy well into the nineteenth century. See Michael Talbot, 'British Diplomacy in the Ottoman Empire during the Long Eighteenth Century', PhD thesis, SOAS, University of London, 2013, 233–4; Bernard Lewis, 'From Babel to Dragomans', in *From Babel to Dragomans: Interpreting the Middle East* (Oxford: OUP, 2004), 24–5.

the sultan, in his familiar illness, had fallen off his horse. This had indeed happened a few days before I was locked up [in the embassy], but I had previously not been aware of it.¹⁰⁶

Some of these claims must have seemed fantastic even to contemporaries, if only because of the number and variety of plots of sabotage and assassination whose execution Kreckwitz was allegedly preparing. Nevertheless, taken individually, none of these claims were outrightly ridiculous. In 1570, for instance, the Ottomans had discovered and prevented an attempt to set fire to the complex of shipyards and warehouses comprising the *tersane-i 'amire*, the imperial shipyards, on the eastern shore of the Golden Horn, which had been orchestrated by the Spanish-Habsburg network of agents in Istanbul.¹⁰⁷

Luckily for Kreckwitz, most members of the *divan*, unlike their monarch, were sceptical and convinced him to order a retranslation of the texts before taking any rash decisions. The ambassador, it seems, escaped with his life thanks to the 'many kind and compassionate persons' who intervened on his behalf.¹⁰⁸ Of course, it is not impossible that Kreckwitz grossly exaggerated the danger of the situation in order to bolster his employers' esteem for him and distract from his own share of responsibility for the lack of caution concerning the security of his papers. Even so, the ambassador's belief in the harmful part which Mörth played in those days appears to have been largely genuine.

As the evidence collected during the search of the Imperial embassy was reviewed in the days following Murad III's initial outburst of rage, Koca Sinan's zeal seems to have cooled off. The whole episode, in fact, appears to have been another calculated provocation by Koca Sinan Paşa in the hope of increasing pressure on Kreckwitz and thus Emperor Rudolf II so that the latter would give in and have the outstanding tribute delivered to Istanbul post-haste. In addition to the danger of violence against the diplomat himself, this involved stepping up the credible threat of launching a full-scale campaign. In the context of the events following the search of the embassy Archduke Matthias recognized both these threats as realistic and likely options for the immediate future as soon as he had learned about the confiscation of documents from the *elçi han*.¹⁰⁹ Even though Hasan Paşa Predojević had been able to win support for his unauthorized military actions in Croatia, as yet neither the sultan nor the majority of his viziers were willing to go to war against the 'king of Vienna'. Sinan probably calculated that the scandal which the documents purported to reveal might change their minds.¹¹⁰ This view is also supported by Mörth's insistence that the search of the embassy had been 'an idea of

¹⁰⁶ All quotations from HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for 1593 May–June, fos. 57^r–63^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 22 May 1593), at fo. 58^r–v.

¹⁰⁷ Gürkan, 'Efficacy', 32; Gürkan, 'Mediating Boundaries', 112.

¹⁰⁸ HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for 1593 May–June, fos. 57^r–63^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 22 May 1593), at fo. 58^v.

¹⁰⁹ KA, AFA, box 32, file 1593/6/¼, unfoliated (Matthias to Rudolf II, Vienna, 11 June 1593), at leaves 2^v–3^r.

¹¹⁰ Compare the discussion in Malcolm, *Agents of Empire*, 391–5. On Koca Sinan Paşa's strategic use of documents, see Özgen, 'Koca Sinan Paşa and Factional Politics', 15.

the Grand Vizir [*sic*], who exacted from him this proof that he was not shamming Islam' as well as his financially precarious position pending the award of the *timar* (revenue grant) promised him after his conversion.¹¹¹ Moreover, reading Kreckwitz's reports from May and June, it is difficult to escape the impression that Koca Sinan's son Mehmed Paşa and the grand vizier were playing a game of 'good cop/bad cop' in which the former repeatedly appeared to defend the Habsburgs, and in particular the Imperial ambassador, against accusations of espionage and deceit put forward by his father.¹¹² In this climate, the immediate crisis was resolved at the end of June 1593, when Kreckwitz repeatedly assured his interlocutors that the 'honourable presents' would be delivered soon. Consequently, the embassy's house arrest was lifted and Matthia del Faro released from prison. Provided war would be averted for the time being and the ambassador granted a courier to communicate the agreement to Vienna, he promised to 'vouch personally for the two presents'.¹¹³ For now, Koca Sinan's gambit had obtained an acceptable outcome. Perhaps his more conciliatory tone at this point stemmed from the realization that his attempt to manipulate the situation had gone too far and was actually playing into the hands of the *beylerbeyi* of Bosnia who appears as a personal enemy in İbrahim Peçevi's history. The grand vizier himself, therefore, may have been caught off guard by the renewed escalation brought about by Hasan's defeat and death during yet another—officially unsanctioned—attempt to take the Croatian fortress of Sisak shortly afterwards.¹¹⁴

The events following Ladislaus Mörth's conversion illustrate the extent to which Ottoman grandees used the resources of their households—Mörth was neither the only member of Koca Sinan's household nor the only renegade to be involved in this episode—in pursuit of their political aims. The conversion and defection of Friedrich von Kreckwitz's steward provided the grand vizier with access to privileged information and an opportunity to exploit it, as well as plausible disinformation, in order to promote the foreign-policy interests of his ruler vis-à-vis the Holy Roman Emperor while at the same time rallying support for his own vision of the steps necessary for their successful implementation. The skilful use of information in this context uncannily recalls Uluç Ali's attempts to mobilize the Ottoman fleet against Spain less than a decade earlier. Such efforts, however, required that the household be well connected not only within the Ottoman elite but also beyond the Empire's borders.¹¹⁵

¹¹¹ *CSP Venice*, ix.96–7, no. 197 (Zane to Doge and Senate, Constantinople, 2 Aug. 1593), at p. 96; HHStA, Türkei I, box 81, bundle for 1593 July–Aug., fos. 210^{r-v} and 214^{r-v} ('Copi deren schriften'), at fo. 210^r.

¹¹² See, for example, HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for 1593 Mar.–Apr., fos. 140^r–143^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 23 Apr. 1593, enciphered), at fos. 141^r–143^r; fos. 164^r–169^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 26 Apr. 1593), at fos. 164^v–165^r; bundle for 1593 May–June, fos. 57^r–63^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 22 May 1593), at fo. 59^r.

¹¹³ HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for 1593 May–June, fos. 57^r–63^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 22 May 1593), at fo. 60^r; Seidel, *Denckwürdige Gesandtschaft*, 123–4; *CSP Venice*, ix.77, no. 176 (Zane to Doge and Senate, Constantinople, 20 June 1593).

¹¹⁴ Malcolm, *Agents of Empire*, 394, 397–8; Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, 173–4; Bayerle (ed.), *Ottoman Diplomacy*, 9; Peçevi, *Tarihi*, ii.342–4.

¹¹⁵ Gürkan, 'Fooling the Sultan'.

EMBEDDEDNESS IN TRANS-IMPERIAL NETWORKS

The situation of Ottoman officials like the *kapudan paşa* and their households 'in a trans-imperial, trans-cultural matrix of household relations extending, at least, throughout the Afro-Eurasian oikumene' was highlighted by Palmira Brummett in 2010.¹¹⁶ The operative importance of such connectivity for successful conduct in office is borne out in a comparison of the four men who served as admirals of the Ottoman fleet between 1571 and 1595: Uluç Ali, Damad İbrahim, Uluç Hasan, and Cigalazade Yusuf Sinan. While undoubtedly closest to the sultan because of his marriage to one of Murad III's daughters, Damad İbrahim was also the only one who had entered the Ottoman elite through the *devşirme* and therefore did not have any prior naval experience. İbrahim had been given the office immediately after Uluç Ali's death in 1587, but soon proved to be the wrong man for the job. After only a few months, he was replaced with Uluç Hasan. When the latter arrived in the summer of 1588, he found, according to the English ambassador Edward Barton, 'everie thinge out of order by reason of the negligence or as I maie more trulie saie the little witt or wisdom of his predecessor Ebrahim Bassa and his officers'.¹¹⁷ It fell to Hasan to put Humpty Dumpty together again.

In his report, Barton focused not merely on İbrahim's personal incompetence, but also on that of the subordinates whom the admiral had introduced into the navy. In spite of having been born in the vicinity of Ragusa (Dubrovnik) and having served in Alexandria, an important Mediterranean port city, İbrahim evidently lacked the Mediterranean connections which were essential to successful conduct in this office. For, as Brummett has observed, 'the *kapudan*, because of the scope and location of his "fief" was directly approximated to Mediterranean affairs in ways that other civil servants were not'. This naturally also included the fields of diplomacy, both at the imperial centre and on the spot, as well as intelligence. In contrast to Damad İbrahim, his predecessor as well as his two successors were extensively tied into Mediterranean webs of contact. In addition to their Italian birth and any contacts that they maintained with their former homeland, Uluç Ali and Uluç Hasan in particular benefited from their ties to the North African corsairing milieu which, as the careers of these two admirals testify, remained a crucial source of skilled manpower for the Ottoman navy. The contacts between Cigalazade and his brother Carlo Cigala, which are investigated in Chapter 5, illustrate the benefits which such trans-imperial connections provided to Ottoman intelligence: according to Venetian sources, the Ottomans first learnt of a 'French landing in Dalmatia' in February 1600 from a letter which Carlo had sent to the

¹¹⁶ Palmira Brummett, 'Placing the Ottomans in the Mediterranean World: The Question of Notables and Households', *Osmanlı Araştırmaları/Journal of Ottoman Studies*, 36 (2010), 75–94, quotation from p. 77.

¹¹⁷ TNA, SP 97/1, pt 2, fos. 138^r–139^v (Barton to Sir Francis Walsingham, Constantinople, 29 Aug./8 Sept. 1588), at fo. 138^v.

admiral.¹¹⁸ For Damad İbrahim, the lack of integration into such Mediterranean networks therefore made his job comparatively more difficult.¹¹⁹

Having said this, the Ottoman admiralty and its incumbents were not necessarily unique among Ottoman officialdom in this respect. While ostensibly a Mediterranean official, the *kapudan paşa* needs to be understood primarily as the governor of an Ottoman border province, and considerable evidence suggests that trans-imperial connections and expertise played a role in appointments to such regions more generally. The belligerent *beylerbeyi* of Bosnia in the early 1590s, for example, was a *devşirme* recruit from Herzegovina.¹²⁰ Likewise, the case of Pál Márkházy attests to the extent to which local embeddedness was valued in the context of the Empire's land border with Transylvania. Márkházy, a member of the Transylvanian nobility, came to the Porte in the 1570s in the hope of obtaining the voivodeship of that principality. Although his efforts were to no avail, he remained in the Ottoman capital as a client of Koca Sinan Paşa's. When Sinan was dismissed as grand vizier in 1582, Márkházy was imprisoned, possibly at the instigation of the current prince of Transylvania, Kristóf Báthory. During his imprisonment or otherwise soon after his release, the Transylvanian pretender embraced Islam, thereby abandoning his hopes of becoming voivode. Instead, İbrahim Bey, as he was now called, served in provinces bordering Transylvania where, in Barton's words, 'he hath donne that his native Contrie excedinge harme', presumably partly because he held a grudge against the prince of Transylvania (who was, after all, not Márkházy himself) and partly because he knew the region so well and had contacts which provided him with information. Indeed, Sándor Papp has shown that he was given charge of the *sancak* (district) of Lipova (Hungarian and German: Lippa) expressly 'to report on events in Transylvania', that is for explicit purposes of intelligence. The interrogation of Márkházy's cousin by the Austrian-Habsburg authorities in 1593 indicates that the two men continued to meet in spite of Márkházy's conversion to Islam.¹²¹ By then, the Transylvanian-born renegade's knowledge and expertise had extended further to the southwest to encompass Habsburg Croatia. According to Kreckwitz's informants, Márkházy had advised Grand Vizier Kanijeli Siyavuş Paşa to give his blessing to Hasan Paşa Predojević's siege of Bihać in 1592. The advice was based on

¹¹⁸ CSP Venice, ix.397–8, no. 856 (Girolamo Capello to Doge and Senate, Constantinople, 22 Feb. 1600). Intelligence evidently flowed both ways. See Gürkan, 'Espionage', 175, 219.

¹¹⁹ Brummett, 'Placing the Ottomans', 89, see also her discussion on pp. 92–3 of Gilles Veinstein, 'Les Documents émis par le *kapudân paşa* dans le fonds ottoman de Patmos', in Nicolas Vatin and Veinstein (eds), 'Les Archives de l'insularité ottomane', *Documents de travail du Cetobac*, 1 (Jan. 2010), 13–19, <http://cetobac.ehess.fr/docannexe/file/1353/les_archives_de_l_insularite_ottomane.pdf>, accessed 18 Feb. 2016; White, 'Catch and Release'.

¹²⁰ Emrah Safa Gürkan, 'The Centre and the Frontier: Ottoman Cooperation with the North African Corsairs in the Sixteenth Century', *Turkish Historical Review*, 1 (2010), 125–63; Malcolm, *Agents of Empire*, 393.

¹²¹ TNA, SP 97/1, pt 2, fo. 180^v (Barton to Walsingham, Constantinople, 22 Aug./1 Sept. 1589), first quotation from fo. 180^v; Sándor Papp, 'From a Transylvanian Principality to an Ottoman Sanjak: The Life of Pál Márkházy, a Hungarian Renegade', *Chronica*, 4 (2004), 57–67, second quotation from p. 67; KA, AFA, box 32, file 1593/11/ad 2b, unfoliated ('*Recdy Andräschen, Markhasi Pauln Imbraim Beegs zu Lippa Vetterts, Aussag, wie er die von gedachten seinem vettern, und andern fürnembten Türggen, vernumben hatt*').

what appears to have been detailed intelligence about conditions in the Habsburg border garrisons, including knowledge about pay arrears and the lack of provisions and materiel.¹²² Whether Márkházy's career is fully representative of a general principle of Ottoman appointments, though, is a question whose answer requires additional research among the commanders in the various frontier zones. The general predominance of Rumelians in the sultan's service as a result of the *devşirme* in the period examined here, however, indicates that trans-imperial connections may have played a role even in performance in, perhaps also appointments to, offices unconnected to the Ottoman fleet. As we saw earlier, this clearly and quite naturally was the case for the members of the corps of dragomans of the Porte and *çavuş* like Mahmud Bey and Ramazan Çavuş.

The evidence reviewed here complicates the assertion that 'alienness' and a lack of local ties were central criteria for admission to the sultan's service throughout the Empire's 'classical age'.¹²³ While, on the surface at least, uprooting recruits was an integral element of the *devşirme*, the latter was never the only recruitment system in place. In fact, the biographies of converts such as Mahmud Bey and Cığalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa show close parallels to those of descendants of the Byzantine and Balkan nobilities like Mesih Paşa, a nephew of the Byzantine Emperor Constantine IX Palaiologos, and Hersekzade Ahmed Paşa, son of the Bosnian Duke Stjepan Vukčić-Kosača, who not only joined the Ottoman elite in the mid-fifteenth century but also attained high office, notably the grand vizierate. Heath Lowry has suggested that such members of the old elites were attractive candidates for office precisely because of their local ties and knowledge, including the languages used by the populations of their native regions, and their status as members of 'the very families who had ruled the area for centuries . . . If the descendants of the former rulers found a niche in the Ottoman hierarchy, might this not encourage their former subjects to do so as well?'¹²⁴ The renegades discussed here testify to the fact that a concern for continuity between Ottoman rule and what had gone before as well as between an individual's pre-Ottoman and Ottoman personas and histories continued to matter at least until well into the seventeenth century. Bearing in mind the continued relationships between Ottoman convert officials and their origin communities examined in the next chapter, one could, with good reason, go so far to argue that the presence of officials drawn from the Empire's Christian population as well as from abroad helped more tightly integrate the Empire's territories in South Eastern and Central Europe as well as the Mediterranean, making the underlying recruitment practices invaluable on this account.¹²⁵

¹²² HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for 1593 Mar.–Apr., fos. 108r–116v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 8 Apr. 1593), at fos. 110r–111r.

¹²³ Lewis A. Coser, 'The Alien as a Servant of Power: Court Jews and Christian Renegades', *American Sociological Review*, 27 (1972), 574–81.

¹²⁴ Heath W. Lowry, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State* (SUNY Series in the Social and Economic History of the Middle East; Albany: SUNY Press, 2003), ch. 7, quotation from pp. 118–19.

¹²⁵ Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 124 n. 41, 128.

MAKING SENSE OF RENEGADE NETWORKS

In order to better understand how Christian-European converts found a place for themselves in Ottoman elite society, it is illuminating to take a close look at the social network which formed around the chief dragoman Mahmud Bey (Figure 4.1). Largely thanks to Stephan Gerlach's diary but also the material preserved in the archives in Vienna, this particular web of associations is one of the best-documented examples of a network of renegades in the Empire. Its particular significance lies both in the specific individuals which it involved and the fact that it was established at what we might think of as the mid-level imperial administration.¹²⁶ Even though Mahmud Bey himself was certainly a more prominent member of the sultan's service, in terms of status and prestige he was clearly subordinate to the top brass who bore the titles of *paşa* and vizier. Mahmud's network crucially included numerous interpreters and *çavuşs*, among them Markus Penckner and Adam Neuser who themselves became key nodes.

Born to a Lutheran family, Neuser had studied theology and obtained his doctorate from Heidelberg University at a time when the Palatinate was one of the main centres of Reformed theology in the Holy Roman Empire. His intensive study of the bible eventually convinced him and a circle of like-minded theologians including Johann Sylvanus that the doctrine of the Trinity, which is a fundamental tenet of Catholic as well as Lutheran and Reformed theology, lacked a scriptural basis. Centrally, they denied the divine nature of Jesus Christ, regarding him instead as an entirely human being, rather than as a person of God. Neuser and Sylvanus's opponents quickly labelled them as 'Arians', a catch-all designation for those who reject the doctrine of the Trinity as defined by the First Council of Nicaea in 325.¹²⁷

Neuser's theological radicalization was most probably connected to the rivalries between different factions within Heidelberg's religious establishment which concerned appointments as well as the question of whether to follow the Calvinist or

¹²⁶ Brummert, 'Placing the Ottomans', 80, 90, 93; Carter Vaughn Findley, 'Political Culture and the Great Households', in Suraiya N. Faruqi (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, iii: *The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603–1839* (Cambridge: CUP, 2006), 76; Sievert, *Zwischen arabischer Provinz und Hoher Pforte*, 323–4.

¹²⁷ Burchill, *Heidelberg Antitrinitarians*, 11–19, 107–8; Raoul Motika, 'Adam Neuser: Ein Heidelberger Theologe im Osmanischen Reich', in Sabine Prätör and Christoph K. Neumann (eds), *Frauen, Bilder und Gelehrte: Studien zu Gesellschaft und Künsten im Osmanischen Reich; Festschrift Hans Georg Majer*, 2 vols (Istanbul: Simurg, 2002), ii.523, 526–7; Mulsow, 'Fluchträume', 34–5; Mulsow, 'Neusers Brief', 294. Heberer, *Aegyptiaca servitus*, 348, and Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 36, call Neuser an 'Arian'. On Antitrinitarianism, see Lech Szczucki, 'Antitrinitarianism', in Hans J. Hillebrand (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, 4 vols (Oxford: OUP, 1996), i.55–61; Gunther Wenz, 'Anti-Trinitarianism', in David B. Barrett, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Erwin Fahlbusch (eds), *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, 5 vols (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans and Leiden: Brill, 1998–2002), i.87. On the doctrine of the trinity and the controversies surrounding it, Philip A. Rolnick and John F. Hoffmeyer, 'Trinity', in Barrett, Bromiley, and Fahlbusch (eds), *Encyclopedia of Christianity*, v.540–51, esp. 541–2 on the Arian controversy and the Council of Nicaea; R. L. Richard, W. J. Hill, and B. L. Marthaler, 'Trinity, Holy', in B. L. Marthaler (ed.), *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 15 vols (2nd edn, Detroit: Thomson/Gale and Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 2003), xiv.189–201.

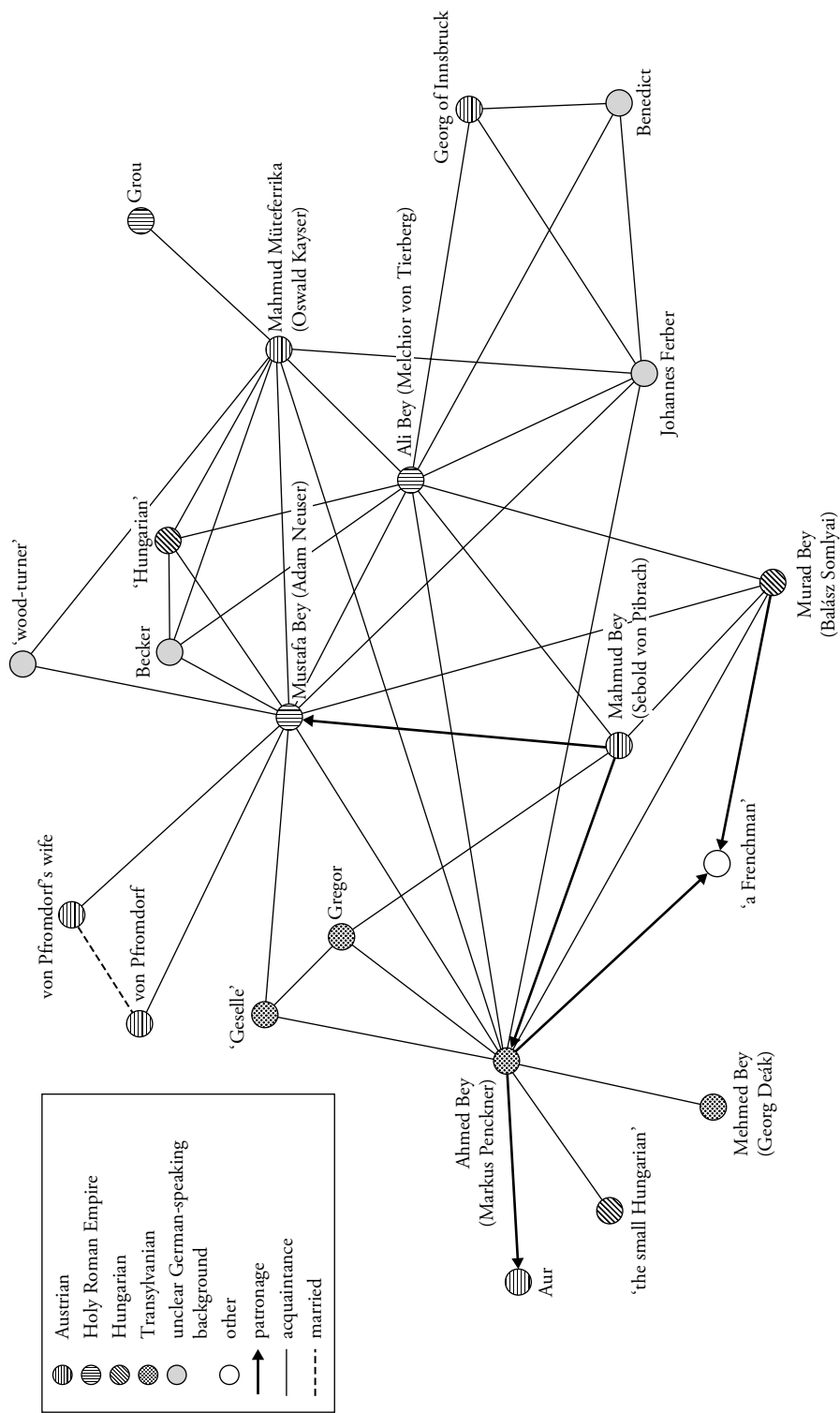


Figure 4.1. A network of German and Hungarian speakers in the Ottoman elite.

the Zwinglian church order. The dispute found its climax when a search of Neuser's quarters produced a letter addressed to Sultan Selim II in which the theologian expressed his wish to embrace Islam and invited the sultan to conquer the whole of Europe. Although it remains unclear whether this document was ever more than an exercise in rhetoric, the church council of Heidelberg considered it sufficient evidence to charge Neuser and his associates with heresy as well as treason. While Sylvanus and others were executed in the winter of 1572, Neuser had managed to escape. After travelling around Europe for some time, he reached Istanbul in summer 1572. It is reasonable to assume that it was Mahmud Bey, then the chief dragoman of the Porte, who ultimately introduced the new arrival and his travel companion Markus Penckner to Sokollu Mehmed Paşa and acted as their principal patron.¹²⁸

Mahmud's closest collaborator was Murad Bey (Balász Somlyai). Like his colleague, Murad had been taken captive by Ottoman forces at Mohács and eventually converted to Islam. It is possible, although far from certain, that the two interpreters had known each other even before entering Ottoman service. Not only had both allegedly served as pages to the Hungarian king Louis II, they may even have met during their studies at the University of Vienna. The journal of Stephan Gerlach, who had met both men when he was the chaplain at the Imperial embassy, however, appears to be the only source for their academic training. And the relevant passage is syntactically and grammatically too ambiguous to be certain that it refers not only to Murad but also to Mahmud. Be that as it may, their involvement in the Porte's diplomatic dealings certainly brought them into frequent contact with one another as well as foreign representatives in the capital.¹²⁹

After the deaths of Mahmud and Adam Neuser in 1575 and 1576, respectively, it seems that Markus Penckner became the group's focal point.¹³⁰ As late as 1592, Ambassador Friedrich von Kreckwitz mentioned

a man from Austria who goes by the name of Aur. Seven years ago, he was taken captive in Bihać and eventually became a Turk and was named Mahmud. Afterwards he served the man Penckner and finally took the latter's wife and thus everything he had left behind [on his death].¹³¹

This short reference suggests that Penckner had been Aur's patron, just as Mahmud Bey had been his twenty years earlier. Perhaps Aur had even been named in honour

¹²⁸ Motika, 'Neuser', 523, 527–30, 533–4; Mulsow, 'Fluchträume', 34, 37–46; Mulsow, 'Neusers Brief', 293–4, 304–5; Burchill, *Heidelberg Antitrinitarians*, 25–7, 108–11, 117–20, 125; Heberer, *Aegyptiaca servitus*, 349; HHStA, Polen I, box 84, fos. 112^r–113^v (Penckner to Marcus Gerber, Constantinople, 23 Mar. 1573); Müller, *Franken im Osten*, 217–18, 223; Müller, *Prosopographie*, vi.179 (entry no. 002271); vii.37 (Neuser), vii.155 (Penckner, here as 'Pentner').

¹²⁹ Ács, 'Tarjumans Mahmud and Murad', 309–11; Krstić, 'Of Translation and Empire', 136; Matuz, 'Pfortendolmetscher', 49, 53; Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 33.

¹³⁰ On Murad's death, see Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 91, 134; Ács, 'Tarjumans Mahmud and Murad', 311; Matuz, 'Pfortendolmetscher', 51. On Neuser's, Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 254; Heberer, *Aegyptiaca servitus*, 349; Motika, 'Neuser', 534.

¹³¹ KA, IÖHKR, Croatica, box 4, file 1592/10/119, fos. 115^r–152^v (Kreckwitz to Ernst, Constantinople, 13 Sept. 1592 with postscript of 14 Sept.), at fos. 150^v–151^r.

of the late chief dragoman. That he inherited from Penckner at all is noteworthy in light of the fact that Gerlach called the latter a 'mamluk', the Arabic for slave and, in this context, an indicator that he may have formally acquired *kul* status.¹³² In theory, therefore, Penckner's belongings should have fallen to the sultan just as Uluç Ali's and Uluç Hasan's had on their deaths. But it seems that such confiscations were not universally enforced, perhaps also because the Transylvanian's fortune was insignificant in comparison to that of his two Italian-born contemporaries.¹³³

Kreckwitz's statement about inheritance is of particular interest because it implies that Aur had succeeded Penckner as the leader of the household. This would explain not only why he had ended up in possession of all of Penckner's goods but also why he had married his widow. Jane Hathaway has termed this practice the 'heritable wife' phenomenon which was an integral 'part of the process of inheriting and taking over the house of the patron'.¹³⁴ In this light, Gerlach's report that Adam Neuser had requested Ambassador Ungnad's advice about whether to marry the widow of Mahmud Bey indicates that the former priest was at least one of the contenders for the leadership of Mahmud's household.¹³⁵ Marrying the first lady of the household in this way served to legitimize the new male household leader's position. At the same time, this practice ensured the woman's continued material well-being, whose economic position heavily depended on the existence of other potential inheritors of the deceased husband's estate, and provided her with the attachment needed to maintain her status and political identity as well as her role as an actor in household politics.¹³⁶ When Aur succeeded Penckner in this way, he also 'inherited' a peculiar source of income in the form of payments from the Imperial ambassador in return for intelligence services.¹³⁷

In 1974, Metin Kunt first drew attention to the importance of shared *cins*, which he translated as 'ethnic-regional' origins, in the formation of patronage networks among members of the Ottoman elite in general, particularly during the seventeenth century. Although Kunt was careful in pointing out that 'the implications of *cins* solidarity in Ottoman politics in general are much more difficult to ascertain',

¹³² Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 122.

¹³³ Colin Imber, *Ebu's-Su'ud: The Islamic Legal Tradition* (Jurists: Profiles in Legal Theory; Stanford, CA: SUP, 1997), 78–9; Erdem, *Slavery*, 6–11; Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, 41–4, 54–6.

¹³⁴ Hathaway, *Politics of Household*, 119.

¹³⁵ Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 99. Compare the allegation that Neuser had been committing adultery with Mahmud's wife even before the dragoman's death noted by Burchill, *Heidelberg Antitrinitarians*, 121 in the diary of Pierre Lescalopier who had met Neuser at a dinner party in June 1574. Gerlach, for his part, noted Neuser's emphatic assertion that he had not touched Mahmud's widow when he visited her one night in 1575 to discuss marriage plans.

¹³⁶ Hathaway, *Politics of Household*, ch. 6, esp. pp. 120–1. On the political importance of women, see also Peirce, *Imperial Harem*; Brummett, 'Placing the Ottomans', 91–2. On women's claims under Islamic inheritance law, see Joseph Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (2nd edn, Oxford: OUP, 1966), 170–3; Walter G. Andrews and Mehmet Kalpaklı, *The Age of Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early-Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 16.

¹³⁷ KA, İÖHKR, Croatica, box 4, file 1592/10/119, fos. 115^v–152^v (Kreckwitz to Ernst, Constantinople, 13 Sept. 1592 with postscript of 14 Sept.), at fos. 150^v–151^r. On the household's need for a source of revenue, see Hathaway, *Politics of Household*, 25.

he emphasized that it was at least 'one operative factor'.¹³⁸ More recent research has confirmed this conclusion. During the minority of Sultan Ahmed I, for example, his mother Handan Sultan gave preference to fellow Bosnians when appointing high-ranking officials and similar patterns have been observed in other parts of the Empire including the Maghreb.¹³⁹ There was nothing particularly Ottoman about the importance of shared origins in forming such networks of patronage and clientage relationships, however. Similar patterns are well documented in contemporary Christian Europe as well. Discussing patronage relationships in the papal states, Wolfgang Reinhard noted that 'supporting relatives, compatriots, or [members of] other groups with common origins, such as the members of that [religious] order from which the pope had emerged, was a duty to whose fulfilment those who fell into these categories were virtually entitled'.¹⁴⁰

In a society in which vertical ties between patrons and clients were crucial, shared *cins* played an important role in the integration of slaves as well as freedmen and freedwomen more generally. This emerges clearly from Nur Sobers-Khan's study of the manumission records in the Galata court registers for the period 1560–72. Among the details which scribes recorded in the descriptions of slaves was their *aşl* (natal origins). Although semantically different from *cins*, which implies 'membership in an ethnic group', Sobers-Khan has pointed out that 'the two overlap very closely, because identification with a specific *cins* was clearly determined by one's *aşl*'. On the whole, moreover, both identifications seem to have been assigned by scribes or owners, thus reflecting an outside perception rather than the slave's own identification. As such, Sobers-Khan argues, *cins* and *aşl* labels served as a shorthand description of the slave's character and suitability for certain tasks. Upon manumission, such identification attached the freed slave to a community of individuals of similar 'putative geographical origins'. These attachments were crucial for establishing an individual's place in Ottoman society.¹⁴¹

A common language, which Metin Kunt considers central to the formation of *cins*-based networks, was not the only factor to give cohesion to the network outlined in Figure 4.1.¹⁴² Although the group did include a good many German speakers, it is noteworthy that almost all members, regardless of their native languages, possessed some sort of connection to territories which used to be part

¹³⁸ Metin İ. Kunt, 'Ethnic-Regional (*Cins*) Solidarity in the Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Establishment', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 5 (1974), 236–7, 239.

¹³⁹ Börekcî, 'Factions and Favorites', 130; Jocelyne Dakhlia, '"Turcs de profession"? Réinscriptions lignagères et redéfinitions sexuelles des convertis dans les cours maghrébines (XVI^e–XIX^e siècles)', in Mercedes García-Arenal (ed.), *Conversion islamiques: Identités religieuses en Islam méditerranéen* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 2002), 166 (see also the literature cited there); Bennisar, 'Les Chrétiens convertis à l'Islam', 50.

¹⁴⁰ Wolfgang Reinhard, *Paul V. Borghese (1605–1621): Mikropolitische Papstgeschichte* (Päpste und Papsttum, 37; Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 2009), 57–8.

¹⁴¹ Sobers-Khan, *Slaves without Shackles*, 90, 106–17, first quotation from p. 90; Sobers-Khan, 'Fırâsetle nazar edesin: Recreating the Gaze of the Ottoman Slave Owner at the Confluence of Textual Genres', in Firges et al. (eds), *Well-Connected Domains*, 104–9, second quotation from p. 104; Ehud R. Toledano, *As if Silent and Absent: Bonds of Enslavement in the Islamic Middle East* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 24–5, 29–32; Hathaway, *Politics of Household*, 167.

¹⁴² Kunt, 'Ethnic-Regional (*Cins*) Solidarity', 235.

of the kingdom of Hungary prior to the Ottoman conquests, especially Transylvania. Although the sociogram lists Murad Bey as a Hungarian—a political identification which is correct for the time of his capture—he was born in what today is Baia Mare (Hungarian: Nagybánya, German: Frauenbach) in Romania, a part of Transylvania.¹⁴³ For others, the link with Transylvania is less obvious than the locus of their birth. But dragomans such as Mahmud Bey and Ali Bey (Melchior von Tierberg) had a professional interest in the region, given the Porte's efforts to extend and preserve its suzerainty over the now independent voivodes there. Mahmud, in particular, was deeply involved in the pertinent diplomatic negotiations.¹⁴⁴ Neuser, too, maintained links with Transylvania, where he corresponded and later met with fellow Unitarians.¹⁴⁵ Moreover, after his move to Istanbul, he and Penckner supported the bid of Gáspár Békés—a supporter of Antitrinitarian doctrines—for the voivodeship of Transylvania against István Báthory.¹⁴⁶

Indeed, Unitarian leanings provided yet another bond which united the members of this network. This may also explain the close links which many of them had to Transylvania where Antitrinitarian theological positions enjoyed wider currency than elsewhere in Christian Europe. In fact, Neuser had attempted to reach Transylvania even before his arrest in Heidelberg because he had erroneously thought that Unitarianism enjoyed the voivode's favour.¹⁴⁷ Similar theological sentiments are also evident in some of Murad Bey's works, especially his hymns written in parallel Ottoman, Latin, and Hungarian text, which, as Krstić has pointed out, 'suggest that he envisioned a non-Muslim audience for his work, most probably among Unitarian Transylvanians'.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴³ Krstić, 'Of Translation and Empire', 136.

¹⁴⁴ Angelika Schaser, 'Siebenbürgen', in Edgar Hösch, Karl Nehring, and Holm Sundhausen (eds), *Lexikon zur Geschichte Südosteuropas* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2004), 618; Sándor Papp, 'Transylvania (Ger.: Siebenbürgen; Hung.: Erdély; Rom.: Ardeal, Transilvania; Turk.: Erdel)', in *EOE*, 570–1; Viorel Panaite, '...Our Reign Is Granted by the Turks...': Ottoman Sultans and Tributary Voivodas of Wallachia and Moldavia (Sixteenth–Seventeenth Centuries)', in Maria Baramova et al. (eds), *Power and Influence in South-Eastern Europe: 16–19th Century* (Geschichte: Forschung und Wissenschaft, 38; Berlin: Lit, 2013), 177–89; Ács, 'Tarjumans Mahmud and Murad', 311–12; Matuz, 'Pfortendolmetscher', 49–50. On Ali Bey, see also Nedim Zahirović, 'Two Habsburg Sources of Information at the Sublime Porte in the Second Half of the 16th Century', in Baramova et al. (eds), *Power and Influence*, 420–2.

¹⁴⁵ Mulsow, 'Neusers Brief', 304; Burchill, *Heidelberg Antitrinitarians*, 108–10; Werner Lenk, 'Deutsche Antitrinitarier in Deutschland und in der Emigration', in Robert Dán and Antal Pirnát (eds), *Antitrinitarianism in the Second Half of the 16th Century* ('Studia humanitas': Publications of the Centre for Renaissance Research, 5; Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó; Leiden: Brill, 1982), 85–9.

¹⁴⁶ Motika, 'Neuser', 537; Mulsow, 'Fluchträume', 56; Peter F. Sugar, *Southeastern Europe under Ottoman Rule, 1354–1804* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977), 154–7; István Keul, *Early Modern Religious Communities in East-Central Europe: Ethnic Diversity, Denominational Plurality, and Corporative Politics in the Principality of Transylvania (1526–1691)* (Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions, 143; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 126–7.

¹⁴⁷ Mulsow, 'Neusers Brief', 304; Burchill, *Heidelberg Antitrinitarians*, 108. On Antitrinitarianism and its political role in the region during the sixteenth century, see Keul, *Religious Communities*, esp. 106–38; Mihály Balász, *Early Transylvanian Antitrinitarianism, 1566–1571: From Servet to Palaeologos* (Bibliotheca Dissidentium: Scripta et Studia, 7; Baden-Baden: Koerner, 1996); and the contributions to Dán and Pirnát (eds), *Antitrinitarianism*.

¹⁴⁸ Tijana Krstić, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Stanford, CA: SUP, 2011), 105; Franz Babinger, 'Der Pfortendolmetsch Murād und

Like Uluç Ali's household, that of Mahmud Bey and his successors functioned as a means of assimilating newcomers such as Aur and even promoted their conversion to Islam.¹⁴⁹ Not all of these men had German- or Hungarian-speaking backgrounds. Gerlach's diary notes the arrival of a Frenchman in Istanbul in October 1575 'who voluntarily became a Turk'. Having travelled to the Ottoman capital through Poland and Transylvania,

he had knowledge of... Penckner... whom he sought out [once he had arrived in Istanbul]. [Penckner] took [the Frenchman] to the dragoman Murad Bey and told him that he wished to become a Muslim. [Murad Bey], in turn, brought him before the public divan and reported the case to [Sokollu Mehmed] Paşa.¹⁵⁰

The case is truly remarkable. While in itself perhaps not evidence of an active missionary zeal—although Neuser did try to convince Jacob Palaeologus to embrace Islam in 1573 using *The Guide for One's Turning toward Truth* penned by Murad and it is highly likely that the Frenchman in question would have been instructed using the same text—this episode proves that members of this particular network maintained contacts with people from their old homes and that these contacts and the information transmitted were shared and used in order to facilitate migration into the Ottoman Empire as well as conversion to Islam.¹⁵¹

Let us briefly return once more to Uluç Hasan and Uluç Ali Paşas and the question of how important solidarity was between the members of an Italian *cins* in the Ottoman elite. Figure 4.2 shows that Uluç Ali's household was part of a larger network of renegades which converged on the *kapı ağası* Gazanfer Ağa. It is noteworthy that, with the exception of the two English-born eunuchs in Uluç Hasan's and Cığalazade's households, the vast majority of individuals in this network were of Italian origins. This suggests that the shared perception of belonging to an Italian *cins* exercised a constitutive effect on the network as a whole.

On the other hand, one must be careful not to exaggerate the importance of this effect. While Antonio Fabris concluded that Uluç Hasan 'had found an unequalled supporter in Gazanfer' after he had fallen out with his former master Uluç Ali in 1585, there is no conclusive proof that this had anything to do with their shared Venetian origins. By the same token, the enmity between Gazanfer and his fellow Venetian Frenkbeyoğlu Mehmed Ağa (Marcantonio Querini) as well as the mutual support which Gazanfer and Cığalazade lent each other time and again during their careers would seem strange, if we tried to explain them purely with reference to a perception of shared origins. As Matteo Zane remarked, Cığalazade 'professes

seine Schriften', in Babinger et al. (eds), *Literaturdenkmäler aus Ungarns Türkenzeit: Nach Handschriften in Oxford und Wien* (Ungarische Bibliothek, 1st series, 14; Berlin: De Gruyter, 1927), 33–54; Robert Gragger, 'Der magyarische Text von Murāds "Glaubenshymnus" mit deutscher Übersetzung', in Babinger et al. (eds), *Literaturdenkmäler*, 55–69.

¹⁴⁹ Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 153, 198–9.

¹⁵⁰ Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 122.

¹⁵¹ For Neuser's attempts to convert Palaeologus, see Mulsow, 'Fluchträume', 49–55. On Murad's treatise, Tijana Krstić, 'Illuminated by the Light of Islam and the Glory of the Ottoman Sultanate: Self-Narratives of Conversion to Islam in the Age of Confessionalization', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 51 (2009), 35–6 and 43–54; Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 98–110.

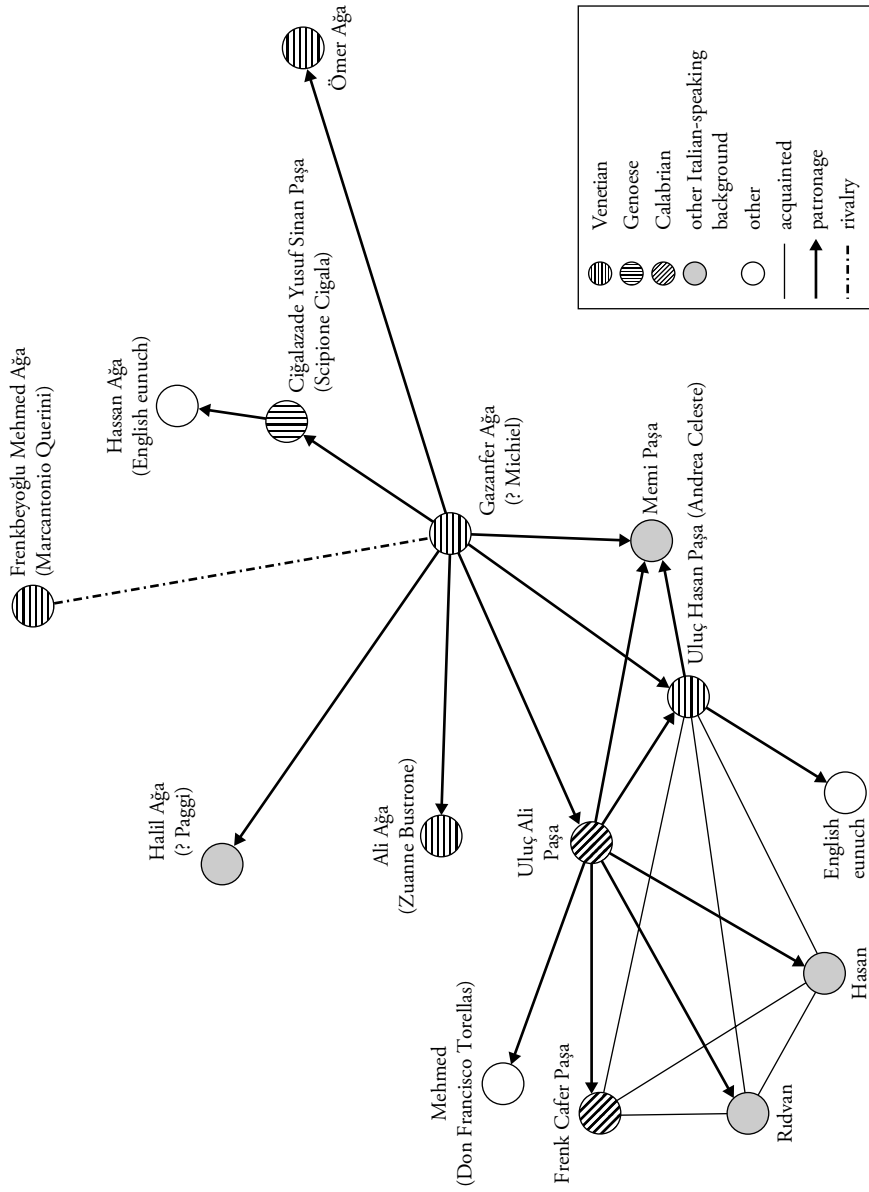


Figure 4.2. Patronage relationships between prominent Italian renegades in the Ottoman elite.

himself to be an enemy of Your Serenity [meaning the Doge], saying that, although he was born in Messina, he is of Genoese descent [and] his motherland is naturally not a great friend of this Most Serene Republic [of Venice].¹⁵² It is more likely that the alliance between the later admiral and the eunuch was forged soon after Selim II's accession, when both were serving in the inner palace. On the other hand, the fact that they could find a common language in Italian, in spite of their different dialects, along with having gone through very similar experiences of captivity and enslavement, would surely have provided them with common ground which facilitated their bonding. Even then, however, Gazanfer, as a eunuch serving close to the sultan, quickly became a natural focus point of patronage networks for all members of the Ottoman elite, regardless of their origins. In later years, his clients famously included Mustafa Ali.¹⁵³

Given the patronage relationships between the members of this network, the resulting degree of co-dependency between the various households, and the ranks within the Ottoman military-administrative hierarchy of the individuals involved, it would be very tempting to conclude that there was such a thing as an 'Italian faction' in the Ottoman elite at this time. After all, we know that the period after Sokollu Mehmed Paşa's assassination in 1579 was marked by intense factional strife, which was only intensified by the frequent changes in grand viziers from Murad III's reign onward. These top-level reappointments usually had wide repercussions throughout the Ottoman state service as the clients and hangers-on of recently dismissed officials were in turn ousted from office to make room for the new appointees' followers.¹⁵⁴

This, however, is too neat an interpretation of the relationships expressed in this network of Italian converts, while at the same time grossly overstating their relevance for Ottoman politics. Figure 4.2 admittedly emphasizes structures at the expense of the dynamics which inevitably result from change over time. It is important to bear in mind, therefore, that this is merely a summary representation. A dispute turned the erstwhile alliance between Uluç Ali and Uluç Hasan, for instance, into enmity in 1585.¹⁵⁵ Similarly, at least after the accession of Mehmed III, Gazanfer and Cığalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa to some extent parted ways, when the *kapı ağası* allied himself with the new *valide sultan*, Mehmed III's mother and Murad III's favourite concubine (*haseki*) Safiye. To illustrate this point, Figure 4.3 shows Cığalazade's position in elite and family networks at the time of his dismissal from the grand vizierate in 1596. Because of his successive marriages to two

¹⁵² First quotation from Fabris, 'Hasan "Il veneziano"', 53; Firpo (ed.), *Relazioni*, xiii.289; Albèri (ed.), *Relazioni*, ix.425. On the enmity between Frenkbeyoğlu Mehmed and Gazanfer, see Pedani, 'Safiye's Household', 22.

¹⁵³ Halil İnalcık, 'Kapı Aghası', in *EP*, vol. iv (1978), pp. 570–1; Emine Fatma Fetvacı, 'Viziers to Eunuchs: Transitions in Ottoman Manuscript Patronage, 1566–1617', PhD thesis, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 2005, ch. 5; Cornell H. Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Ali (1541–1600)* (Princeton, NJ: PUP, 1986), 72, 110, 125–6, 169–72, 182–3.

¹⁵⁴ Murphey, *Ottoman Sovereignty*, 130–2; Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual*, 83; Özgen, 'Koca Sinan Paşa and Factional Politics', 68–77; Sievert, *Zwischen arabischer Provinz und Hoher Pforte*, 323.

¹⁵⁵ Gürkan, 'Fooling the Sultan', 89–90; Fabris, 'Hasan "Il veneziano"', 53.

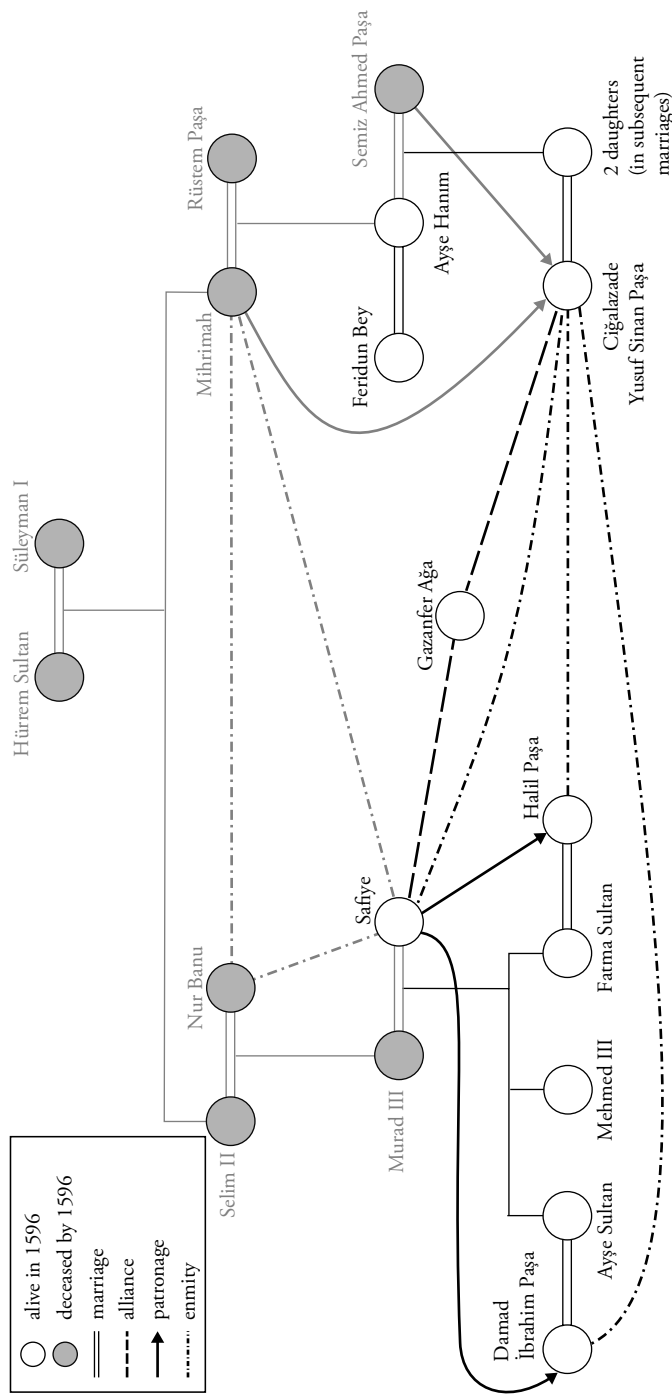


Figure 4.3. Cığalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa's position in elite and family networks in 1596. Relationships with deceased persons, which nevertheless influenced the configuration of alliances and rivalries, are represented in grey.

granddaughters of Rüstem Paşa and Mihrimah Sultan, Cığalazade had ended up on the wrong side of harem rivalries. Although Mihrimah had died in 1578, seventeen years before Mehmed III succeeded to the throne, her rivalry with Safiye after the death of Murad III's mother Nur Banu had led to a deep-rooted alienation between their respective parties. This enmity contributed to cutting short Cığalazade's grand vizierate, although some of his disastrous policies such as the massive reallocation of *timars*, which contributed to the outbreak of the Celali revolts, may ultimately have been the decisive factor for his dismissal.¹⁵⁶ In spite of the factional barrier, however, Gazanfer and Cığalazade seem to have remained on relatively friendly terms. When uprisings led by the *sipahis* in Istanbul in 1601 and 1603 targeted the eunuch's influence, the then *kapudan paşa* exerted himself to protect him, even though in 1603 the *kapı ağası* was beyond redemption. By demand of the enraged soldiers, Gazanfer was executed in Mehmed III's presence.¹⁵⁷

CONCLUSION

Christian-European converts to Islam quite naturally integrated into pre-existing structures and patterns of recruitment, as well as socialization within the Ottoman military-administrative elite. There were no discernible differences in career paths between converted slaves (individuals from beyond the Ottoman borders), *değişirme* recruits (Ottoman Christian subjects), and voluntary converts to Islam (both foreigners and Ottoman subjects). Since the sultan's servants contained large numbers of converts until well into the seventeenth century, this state of affairs is hardly surprising. From an Ottoman point of view, such naturalized foreigners, by and large, were unremarkable, a fact which stands in stark contrast to the attention which these individuals have attracted from their former compatriots as well as historians of Europe.

As far as successful integration into the military-administrative elite was concerned, what ultimately mattered more than juridical subjecthood prior to conversion to Islam was the locus of recruitment, with the main distinction drawn between the household of the sultan and the households of other grandees.

¹⁵⁶ Babinger, 'Mihr-i Mâh Sultân'; Alexander H. de Groot, 'Nûr Bânû', in *EP*, vol. viii (1995), p. 124; Cigdem Balim, 'Şafiyye Wâlide Sultân', in *EP*, vol. viii (1995), pp. 817–18; Benzoni, 'Cicala, Scipione', 330; Peirce, *Imperial Harem*, 91, 240. Safiye Sultan's enmity towards Cığalazade was also remarked upon by contemporary observers. See, for example, TNA, SP 97/3, fo. 264^r (Lello to Cecil, Constantinople, 4/14 Nov. 1598). The Italian renegade's short term as grand vizier has so far not received any appreciable scholarly attention, even though historians have explicitly linked the outbreak of the Celali revolts to the Hungarian campaign of 1596. See Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats*, 203; William J. Griswold, *The Great Anatolian Rebellion, 1000–1020/1591–1611* (Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, 83; Berlin: Schwarz, 1983), 20–1; V. J. Parry, 'The Successors of Sulaimân, 1566–1617', in Michael A. Cook (ed.), *A History of the Ottoman Empire to 1730: Chapters from the Cambridge History of Islam and the New Cambridge Modern History* (Cambridge: CUP, 1976), 129–30; Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, 2 vols (Cambridge: CUP, 1976–7), i.185–6.

¹⁵⁷ Börekçi, 'Factions and Favorites', 48–56; Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 29–31; Dursteler, 'Fatima Hatun', 370–1; Pedani, 'Safiye's Household', 27.

While recruits such as Cığalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa who were trained in the school of Topkapı Palace were 'earmarked' for a distinguished career in the military-administrative service of the Ottoman state, recruits into grandee households might remain in their masters' service, making the leap into provincial administration only, if the head of household himself managed to acquire a position in Ottoman state service. Yet even in this case, as the example of Uluç Hasan Paşa illustrates, the coincidence of having been recruited outside the sultan's household did not automatically rule out appointment to high office. Even though there were of necessity fewer opportunities at the top, room was made for men of talent, skill, and resources. Such talents, skills, and resources had partly been acquired prior to conversion to Islam, especially as far as mastery of Christian-European languages and contacts in Christian Europe were concerned. These mattered most to those who acted as intermediaries, whether in an official or an unofficial capacity, such as interpreters and intelligence agents in the broadest sense possible but also to officials in regions which bordered Christian Europe. Technical experts, on the other hand, are conspicuously rare in the sources on which this book is based.

The crucial household resource, however, were contacts and especially relationships of patronage and mutual assistance. Of course, such relationships were largely determined by household membership with the head of household acting as a patron for his followers. However, subsidiary patronage networks existed even within households. The same goes for rivalries. The experience of Cığalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa serves as a case in point. His networks of allies as well as rivals unsurprisingly involved fellow members of the sultan's household with Gazanfer Ağa, Damad İbrahim Paşa, Damad Halil Paşa, and Safiye Sultan, each of whom also headed substantial households of their own.

Evidence suggests that converts' origins had a considerable influence on their socialization within the Ottoman elite, in some cases even at such an early stage as recruitment into a household. This was the case for Uluç Hasan Paşa and other Italian speakers who joined Uluç Ali Paşa's retinue, even if they were selected primarily for the skills and contacts associated with their particular origins. Perhaps in North Africa, too, just as for slaves in sixteenth-century Galata, *cins* became a way of providing a rough-and-ready classification of individuals to determine their suitability for certain tasks. Unlike in Galata, however, the corresponding labels would have referred less to physical and character traits such as strength or docility as to skill sets.¹⁵⁸ In other instances, such as the renegade network around Mahmud Bey, Adam Neuser, and Markus Penckner and even more so the wider system of alliances among Italian-speaking converts with Gazanfer Ağa at its centre, the constitutive influence of *cins* is far more ambiguous. In the case of the former circle, shared religious views prior to conversion to Islam, notably sympathies for Unitarian Christianity, probably provided a measure of cohesion—certainly among Mahmud, Murad, Neuser, and Penckner—and may even have informed the decision to embrace Islam in the first place.

¹⁵⁸ Sobers-Khan, '*Firâsetle nazar edesin*', 106–9.

It remains to be seen whether shared *cins* played any appreciable role in households' marriages and reproductive strategies. In light of the practice of marrying manumitted harem slaves to their former masters' followers and supporters, it is at least conceivable that patrons would have tried to match up individuals of similar backgrounds. The German–Hungarian network represented in Figure 4.1 contains one married couple in which both spouses hailed from the Habsburg lands, namely Austria and Styria. Gerlach's diary, which is the only evidence for their existence, however, remains unclear on whether the two had been married before moving to the Ottoman Empire or had only met there. That shared *cins* occasionally played a role in the choice of concubines is suggested by the example of Wilhelm Ernst Schmid who was particularly fond of a slave girl from his native Saxony precisely because of her place of birth.¹⁵⁹ As yet, there is little evidence to determine whether such matches were frequent, though, or whether notions of shared origins were usually overruled by other considerations, perhaps even associations of certain qualities such as beauty and fertility with particular *cins* labels.

Whether or not the basis for these networks was really shared *cins*, in the strict sense of actual or perceived regional and cultural origins, common linguistic backgrounds, shared histories and interests, or even simple assumptions about '*cins*-specific' skills, such associations between Christian-European converts in the Ottoman elite are noteworthy not least because they highlight the limits of the transformation inherent in 'turning Turk'. For all that a foreign convert became, indeed had to become, in order to turn into an Ottoman Muslim, he—or she, for that matter—did not become a person without a history. While 'turning Turk' provided the convert with a new affiliation, it was grafted on top of pre-existing layers of local and regional identification.¹⁶⁰ Of course, renegades were not unique in this. Similar forms of association also prevailed among 'domestic' recruits into the military-administrative elite.¹⁶¹ What set the renegades studied in this book apart from the latter more than anything is the fact that the origins to which they referred back lay outside the Ottoman realm.

In this context, the network around Mahmud Bey, Adam Neuser, and Markus Penckner in particular attests to the existence and importance of households for socialization as well as the pursuit of political careers even at lower levels of the Ottoman social hierarchy, thus confirming Palmira Brummett's vision that Ottoman households as 'intersections of "foreigner" and "indigene" transcended class and space'. It also provides evidence that this phenomenon, and thus her 'Ottoman system', was neither peculiarly nor predominantly Mediterranean. Rather than being embedded merely 'in a trans-Mediterranean network of friends

¹⁵⁹ Peirce, *Imperial Harem*, 169; Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 69; Hedda Reindl-Kiel, 'Das Ende einer Kavaliersreise—Beginn einer osmanischen Karriere?', in Reindl-Kiel and Seyfi Kenan (eds), *Deutsch-türkische Begegnungen/Alman-Türk Tesadüfleri: Festschrift für Kemal Beydilli/Kemal Beydilli'ye Armağan* (Bonner Islamstudien, 30; Berlin: EB, 2013), 146.

¹⁶⁰ See also Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople*, 18–21, 123, 129, 184–5.

¹⁶¹ Kunt, 'Ethnic-Regional (*Cins*) Solidarity'; Kunt, 'Households'; Börekçi, 'Factions and Favorites', 134–5.

and associates', Ottoman householders were, in fact, part of a wider system which extended well beyond the Mediterranean world, even in its extended sense.¹⁶²

The fact that this chapter has concentrated on examples of successful integration should not be taken to mean that success stories were the norm. We may rightly suspect that a substantial number, perhaps even the majority of male converts to Islam did not find a permanent place for themselves in the Ottoman elite. This may well have been Ladislaus Mörrth's fate since Kreckwitz's former steward disappears from the historical record soon after the outbreak of war in 1593.¹⁶³ And even while the Ottomans, on the whole, appear to have been very welcoming to new arrivals, they were at times regarded with suspicion and great ambiguity. The case of eleven Hungarian captives who were sent to the galleys 'without examination' in 1583, immediately after having declared their intention to embrace Islam in front of the *divan*, was certainly extreme.¹⁶⁴ Ambiguity was usually expressed more subtly, as suggested by Koca Sinan Paşa's promise of a future income rather than an immediate grant to Mörrth.¹⁶⁵ In a few cases, however, established members of the elite even greeted the newcomers with a degree of resentment, if the rewards they received were considered disproportionate. In the context of the conversion to Islam of Francisco Torellas mentioned in Chapter 2, for instance, David Ungnad reported:

Many Turks curse him, saying that he is neither a Christian nor a Turk and that he probably forfeited his life abroad; now he comes here, is welcomed, and wins a stipend of 1,000 *Talers*, which some Turks serve all their lives trying to attain and barely manage to receive one third of it.¹⁶⁶

In his *Counsel*, Mustafa Ali echoed this sentiment in more general terms when, his generally welcoming attitude towards foreigners notwithstanding, he warned 'that due measure has to be observed in honoring them' so as not to alienate 'manifestly loyal servants who for generations already have been rubbing their faces on [the threshold of] the Sultan's felicitous gate and have tried to demonstrate their boundless devotion through the time they have spent in his service'. If such arrivals were to be 'treated kindlier than they themselves, perhaps even are... appointed officers and magistrates over the old servants', there would be serious danger that the latter, in turn, would choose to defect 'to another country'.¹⁶⁷ If converts' origins were not necessarily the primary reason for resentment, the issue could

¹⁶² Brummett, 'Placing the Ottomans', 82–3, quotations from pp. 89 and 82.

¹⁶³ The latest confirmed mention of Mörrth is contained in *CSP Venice*, ix.101, no. 209 (Zane to Doge and Senate, Constantinople, 23 Aug. 1593). There may be a later reference to him in KA, AFA, box 36, file 1596/4/3a, unfoliated (Petrus Bonhomo to Ungnad, Buda, 3 Apr. 1596), at leaf 21^r. However, the spelling of the name ('Marh') would be a unique variant and the biographical references are too vague to confirm that the passage indeed refers to Kreckwitz's former steward.

¹⁶⁴ HHStA, Türkei I, box 49, bundle for 1583 July–Aug., fos. 113^{r-v}, 101^r–112^v, 114^r–122^v (Friedrich Preiner to Rudolf II, 16 July 1583), at fos. 106^v–107^r.

¹⁶⁵ HHStA, Türkei I, box 81, bundle for 1593 July–Aug., fos. 210^{r-v} and 214^{r-v} ('Copi deren schriften'), at fo. 210^r.

¹⁶⁶ HHStA, Türkei I, box 32, bundle for 1576 Jan.–Apr., fos. 225^r–232^v (Ungnad to Maximilian II, 2 Apr. 1577), at fo. 231^r.

¹⁶⁷ Mustafa Ali, *Counsel*, i.62–3. Also compare Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 1–2.

nevertheless surface in the context of other conflicts. When soldiers and seamen at the *tersane* rioted in 1602, for example, they accused Cığalazade of being an infidel.¹⁶⁸ Nevertheless, such allegations were also informed by established models of voicing political dissent which routinely involved accusations of violating religious and legal norms, thus making infidels even of those who had been born into Muslim families.¹⁶⁹ In any case, that the Ottomans did not always manage to integrate foreigners without friction is only to be expected. Still, what is most surprising about stories and comments like these is their scarcity in the sources. This in itself is a remarkable testament to the integrative capacity of Ottoman elite society.

¹⁶⁸ Ocakaçan, 'Cıgalazade', 336–7. Compare also *ibid.*, 332, and *CSP Venice*, ix.127–8, no. 273 for accusations of espionage against the Ottoman Empire hurled at Cığalazade in 1594.

¹⁶⁹ See, for example, Felix Konrad, 'Coping with the "Riff-raff and Mob": Representations of Order and Disorder in the Patrona Halil Rebellion (1730)', in *Die Welt des Islams*, 54 (2014), 363–98, esp. at p. 377. I am grateful to Felix Konrad for alerting me to similar instances of protest against Ottoman officials in a personal communication on 23 June 2016.

Mobilizing Trans-Imperial Ties

In September 1598, during his first journey with the Ottoman fleet after his return to the admiralty (*kapudanlık*), Çiğalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa paid a visit to Sicily, anchoring off the coast of Messina. Doubtlessly, the sight of Ottoman vessels caused alarm in the island kingdom as well as in neighbouring Naples. This time, however, the admiral did not come to claim lands for the sultan or to raid and rob the coast. His visit was purely social. Çiğalazade sent a messenger ashore with letters to the viceroy of Sicily, Bernardino de Cárdenas y Portugal, Duke of Maqueda, as well as his mother, Lucrezia Cigala. In broken Italian but with great passion, he declared his wish to once again lay eyes on the woman who had given birth to him:

I will not rest in this world without having seen you. I promise you to send you back. Therefore, if you love me as I love you, seek permission to come to me to see me . . . I have no other desire than to see you, hoping by God that you will come.¹

As Çiğalazade himself pointed out, it had already been almost forty years since he had last seen Lucrezia, although he had tried to meet her four years earlier. On that occasion, because ‘I was told that they had put you into the dungeons’, he ‘put fire to and sacked Reggio’, a town on the Italian mainland, directly opposite Messina. The admiral’s frustration at having been denied his wish and his fear for his mother’s life had unleashed itself in bloody revenge.² This time, however, Çiğalazade’s request was granted. Maqueda replied: ‘I will send her [Lucrezia] accompanied by her children and grandchildren aboard a galley, in exchange for which you will send here your eldest son along with two of your galleys as sureties, which will remain in the power of Captain General Don Pedro de Leyva’.³

¹ Ilario Rinieri, ‘Clemente VIII e Sinan Bassà Cicala: Secondo documenti inediti’, pt 3, *La Civiltà Cattolica*, series 16, 10/1125 (20 Apr. 1897), 274–5 (Çiğalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa to Lucrezia Cigala, off the coast of Messina, 20 Sept. 1598).

² Rinieri, ‘Clemente VIII e Sinan Bassà Cicala’, pt 3, pp. 274–5 (Çiğalazade to Lucrezia Cigala, 20 Sept. 1598), at p. 274; Gino Benzoni, ‘Cicala, Scipione’, in A. M. Ghisalberti and M. Pavan (eds), *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1960–), xxv.327. Çiğalazade’s first attempt to meet his mother mentioned in his letter to her can be dated by the reference to his sack of Reggio, which took place in September 1594. See Benzoni, ‘Cicala, Scipione’, 327–8; Rinieri, ‘Clemente VIII e Sinan Bassà Cicala: Secondo documenti inediti’, pt 2, *La Civiltà Cattolica*, series 16, 10/1124 (7 Apr. 1897), 152–3.

³ Rinieri, ‘Clemente VIII e Sinan Bassà Cicala’, pt 3, pp. 275–6 (Duke of Maqueda to Çiğalazade, [Messina], n.d.). Rinieri includes a rather liberal translation of the letter into Italian in the note on p. 275. Emrah Safa Gürkan, ‘Mediating Boundaries: Mediterranean Go-Betweens and Cross-Confessional Diplomacy in Constantinople, 1560–1600’, in Maartje van Gelder and Tijana Krstić (eds), ‘Cross-Confessional Diplomacy’, special issue, *Journal of Early Modern History*, 19/2–3 (2015),

The episode became sufficiently well known for the English ambassador Henry Lello to write on 14 November 1598: 'The Admirall by reporte . . . sent his sonne w[i]th a gallye for his mother and brothers w[i]th a flagge of truce to *Messina*, who came to him, his sonne remayninge pledge, presentinge them many riches'. Rumours of this meeting had already circulated in Istanbul at least two weeks earlier.⁴ While it certainly was not an everyday occurrence that the Ottoman admiral set out with the fleet in order to visit his mother in Christendom, as extreme as this particular case may be, it is part of a wider phenomenon.

Contacts between renegades and the communities which they were said to have abandoned upon 'turning Turk' were not nearly as rare and uncommon as the rhetoric of alterity between Christian Europe and the Islamic Ottoman Empire as well as the resulting dismissal of converts to Islam as traitors and enemies of Christianity and Christendom would have us believe. The cases of families such as the Cigalas show that trans-imperiality was not merely an individual status, but could form the pillar of a veritable family strategy.⁵ Christian-European rulers and their representatives, too, were usually quick to try and capitalize on the presence of former Christians, if and when they became aware of them. Consequently, this chapter will focus less on the agency of renegades themselves, but rather on how Christian Europeans—families and friends as well as political and diplomatic figures—interacted with them and invoked their ties to them for their own ends.

STAYING IN TOUCH

In the first instance, the development of a trans-imperial family strategy required a modicum of contact between relatives on both sides of the border. Contrary to the expectation shared by Christian Europeans and Ottomans that conversion meant severing all ties to former kin and acquaintances, there is considerable evidence that this expectation was merely theoretical.⁶ On Easter Monday 1573, shortly after he had embraced Islam, Markus Penckner wrote a letter to his friend and brother in

121 n. 59 mentions the existence of relevant letters in the Archivo General de Simancas, Estado section, leg. 1158, fos. 186 and 187. Unfortunately, these documents were inaccessible to me at the time of writing.

⁴ TNA, SP 97/3, fos. 263^r–264^v (Henry Lello to Sir Robert Cecil, Constantinople, 4/14 Nov. 1598), at fo. 264^r; fos. 259^v–260^v (Lello to Cecil, Constantinople, 21/31 Oct. 1598), at fo. 260^v. For this visit, see also Benzoni, 'Cicala, Scipione', 330–1; Ralf C. Müller, *Franken im Osten: Art, Umfang, Struktur und Dynamik der Migration aus dem lateinischen Westen in das Osmanische Reich des 15./16. Jahrhunderts auf der Grundlage von Reiseberichten* (Leipzig: Eudora, 2005), 453.

⁵ Compare E. Natalie Rothman, *Brokering Empire: Trans-Imperial Subjects between Venice and Istanbul* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), 12; Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard Wiegers, *A Man of Three Worlds: Samuel Pallache, a Moroccan Jew in Catholic and Protestant Europe*, tr. Martin Beagles (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010).

⁶ In addition to the discussions in this book, see especially Rothman, *Brokering Empire*; Eyal Ginio, 'Childhood, Mental Capacity and Conversion to Islam in the Ottoman State', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 25 (2001), 90–119.

spirit Markus Gerber in Kraków (German: Krakau) from which it is worth quoting at length:

My . . . dear kind brother Markus,

I am always delighted to know whether you and yours are well. I am also sending you this letter to let you know how I am doing these days. You surely remember that I was with you a year ago around this time . . . Now [my companion Adam Neuser and I] are both in the Turkish emperor's service. Adam receives a salary of twelve *akçe* a day and I have ten. I wanted to tell you this in two words so that you know where I am and how I am faring. And if I can serve you in any way, please do not spare me. For although I am where I am, I am still yours.⁷

In many ways, this message is unremarkable in its mundaneness, resembling countless other personal communications in providing personal news and copiously employing formulae of non-committal politeness.

Precisely this ordinariness, however, indicates that Penckner resisted being cast into the stereotypical mould of the renegade as permanently lost to his friends and relations in Christendom. In addition, while the phrase 'I am still yours' on its own might be no more than a polite cliché along the lines of 'Yours faithfully', with the addition of the reminder that the letter writer had relocated to the Ottoman Empire—'although I am where I am'—it suggests that his former sense of belonging continued to matter to him.

Penckner was not the only Christian-European to correspond with friends and family back home. The same bundle of documents also contains a letter written by Adam Neuser to the apothecary Simon who likewise lived in Kraków.⁸ In fact, both men's messages were almost certainly carried together by the very same courier. Although it is not clear how and when these documents made their way to Vienna, where they are kept now, it is likely that they were acquired, perhaps even intercepted, by Austrian-Habsburg agents in the context of Emperor Maximilian II's efforts to secure his son Archduke Ernst's election to the Polish-Lithuanian throne in the mid-1570s.⁹ Others of Neuser's letters and some of his papers have been preserved among those of Stephan Gerlach, David Ungnad's chaplain in Istanbul, at the Research Library in Gotha.¹⁰ In addition, Hedda Reindl-Kiel, for

⁷ HHStA, Polen I, box 84, fos. 112^r–113^v (Markus Penckner to Markus Gerber, Constantinople, [23 Mar. 1573]), at fo. 112^r. The letter is also quoted almost in full in Ralf C. Müller, *Prosopographie der Reisenden und Migranten ins Osmanische Reich (1396–1611)*, 10 vols (Leipzig: Eudora, 2006), vii.155–6; Müller, *Franken im Osten*, 217–18.

⁸ HHStA, Polen I, box 84, fo. 114^{r-v} (Adam Neuser to Simon, Constantinople, 21 Mar. 1573).

⁹ On the Habsburgs' activities in Poland-Lithuania during the two interregna of the 1570s, see Almut Bues, *Die habsburgische Kandidatur für den polnischen Thron während des Ersten Interregnums in Polen 1572/73* (Dissertationen der Universität Wien, 163; Vienna: Verband der wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaften Österreichs, 1984); Christoph Augustynowicz, *Die Kandidaten und Interessen des Hauses Habsburg in Polen-Litauen während des Zweiten Interregnums 1574–1576* (Dissertationen der Universität Wien, 71; Vienna: WUV | Universitätsverlag, 2001).

¹⁰ For a description of the material, see Martin Mulsow, 'Fluchträume und Konversionsräume zwischen Heidelberg und Istanbul: Der Fall Adam Neuser', in Mulsow (ed.), *Kriminelle—Freidenker—Alchemisten* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2014), 36–7 n. 16; Mulsow, 'Adam Neusers Brief an Sultan Selim II. und seine geplante Rechtfertigungsschrift: Eine Rekonstruktion anhand neuer Manuskriptfunde', in Friedrich Vollhardt (ed.), *Religiöser Nonkonformismus und frühneuzeitliche Gelehrtenkultur* (Quellen und Darstellungen zur Geschichte des Antitrinitarismus und Sozinianismus in der Frühen Neuzeit, 2; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2014), 297 n. 20.

example, has been able to study the life and career of the German Wilhelm Ernst Schmid, who embraced Islam in 1700, largely on the basis of his correspondence with a cousin in the principality of Anhalt-Zerbst.¹¹ For the period discussed in this book, however, the phenomenon has been best documented in studies of Venetian renegades. Interaction often went far beyond the mere exchange of letters.

In this respect, the case of the *kapı ağası* (chief of the white eunuch) Gazanfer Ağa has been particularly well studied thanks to the efforts of Eric Dursteler as well as Maria Pia Pedani and Emine Fetvacı. Gazanfer was a member of the Venetian Michiel family which, although not of patrician rank, still enjoyed considerable status as members of the citizen elite (*cittadini originarii*). Having entered the Ottoman Empire, like so many others, as a captive when he was still a child, his Christian first name appears to have been lost in the mists of time. Together with his brother Cafer, Gazanfer was enslaved, converted to Islam, and taken into the princely household of the future Sultan Selim II. When the latter succeeded to the throne on the death of his father Süleyman the Magnificent, he persuaded the two by now evidently trusted slaves to undergo castration in order to serve in his private quarters. By then, the two boys had become young men. Whether or not their advanced age at castration was unusual, Fetvacı's conclusion that the two men's consent to this drastic step 'indicates the strength of . . . [their] political aspirations' is doubtlessly accurate. After all, this was a highly risky operation which frequently resulted in complications in its immediate aftermath. Even in the absence of such complications, the procedure posed long-term risks to the eunuch's health. Nevertheless, the prospect of social advancement—and, indeed, the likelihood of accumulating wealth and power as much as prestige—in some cases rendered the risk acceptable, even if not universally so, as Mustafa Ali's discussion of Mesih Paşa, who allegedly resented his castration, suggests. In spite of the risks, the two Venetians survived and continued to climb the palatial hierarchy.¹² Since the careers of these two eunuchs have been discussed at length by Pedani and Dursteler, and expertly revised by Günhan Börekçi on the basis of hitherto overlooked evidence from the archives of Topkapı Palace, suffice it here to say that Cafer

¹¹ Hedda Reindl-Kiel, 'Das Ende einer Kavaliersreise—Beginn einer osmanischen Karriere?', in Reindl-Kiel and Seyfi Kenan (eds), *Deutsch-türkische Begegnungen/Alman-Türk Tesadüfleri: Festschrift für Kemal Beydilli/Kemal Beydilli'ye Armağan* (Bonner Islamstudien, 30; Berlin: EB, 2013), 106–87.

¹² Emine Fatma Fetvacı, 'Viziers to Eunuchs: Transitions in Ottoman Manuscript Patronage, 1566–1617', PhD thesis, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 2005, 260–2, quotation from p. 261; Eric R. Dursteler, *Renegade Women: Gender, Identity, and Boundaries in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), 1–6; Dursteler, 'Fatima Hatun née Beatrice Michiel: Renegade Women in the Early Modern Mediterranean', *Medieval History Journal*, 12 (2009), 355–6; Maria Pia Pedani, 'Safiye's Household and Venetian Diplomacy', *Turcica*, 32 (2000), 14; Maria Pia Pedani-Fabris, 'Veneziani a Costantinopoli alla fine del XVI secolo', in F. Lucchetta (ed.), 'Veneziani a Costantinopoli, musulmani a Venezia', *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* 15, supplement (1997), 68–70; Jean D. Wilson and Claus Roehrborn, 'Long-Term Consequences of Castration in Men: Lessons from the Skoptzy and the Eunuchs of the Chinese and Ottoman Courts', *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism*, 84 (1999), 4324–31, esp. 4327–30 for a discussion of health problems observed in Ottoman eunuchs. Metin İ. Kunt, 'Ottoman White Eunuchs as Palace Officials and Statesmen (1450–1600)', in Stefan Hanß and Juliane Schiel (eds), *Mediterranean Slavery Revisited (500–1800)/Neue Perspektiven auf mediterrane Sklaverei (500–1800)* (Zurich: Chronos, 2014), 329, notes that, unlike the black eunuchs serving the women's harem, the white eunuchs serving the sultan directly generally underwent castration after the onset of puberty.

had retired from active duty in 1579 and died in 1582, the same year in which his brother Gazanfer became *kapı ağası*. Interestingly, in spite of his promotion, the latter continued to exercise his previous office as *has odabaşı* (master of the privy chamber). This was the first time in Ottoman history that these two important posts were concentrated in the hands of a single person. As a result, 'Gazanfer soon became one of the most prominent power-brokers at the courts of Murad III and Mehmed III'.¹³ In the following years, he spun an enormous web of patronage, part of which is discussed in Chapter 4 and illustrated in Figure 4.2. His alliance with Mehmed III's mother Safiye Sultan and his position as a favourite of the sultan thrice made him the target of revolts by the sultan's cavalry in Istanbul in 1600, 1601, and 1603. During the latter uprising neither his allies nor Sultan Mehmed III were able to save him. He was executed in the presence of the sultan on 6 January 1603.¹⁴

Like other renegades, Gazanfer Ağa re-established contact with his family in 1582 when, possibly through the Venetian *bailo* (resident ambassador), he requested his mother to visit him in Istanbul. The timing of this request is significant. A link between Gazanfer's invitation and Cafer's death can be safely excluded, though, since the former was expressed in February 1582 while the latter was not reported until October.¹⁵ Rather, as Reindl-Kiel has pointed out in the case of Schmid, the timing is indicative of a more general pattern of migration and re-establishing contact with one's family back home known, for example, from British settlers in the New World who, on the whole, tended to contact their families only after they felt that they could report some success in their enterprise.¹⁶ Even if Gazanfer Ağa was still 'only' the master of the privy chamber at that point, he and his brother could already look back on a successful career in the sultan's household. In fact, they had managed to continue their rise in the palace hierarchy despite Selim II's death and the accession of his son, which was accompanied by dismissals and new appointments throughout the sultan's service as a result of the integration of the princely household into the royal one at Topkapı Palace. Moreover, both men must clearly have acquired more than just a modicum of wealth. According to Venetian sources, when Gazanfer's mother arrived in 1583, she resided 'in her son's seraglio' throughout her year-long stay, which is suggestive not only of the obvious fact that the eunuch by then had acquired a stately home of his own but also, crucially,

¹³ Günhan Börekçi, 'Factions and Favorites at the Courts of Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603–17) and His Immediate Predecessors', PhD dissertation, Ohio State University, Columbus, 2010, 49–50, quotation from p. 50; Pedani, 'Safiye's Household', 14–15; Pedani-Fabris, 'Veneziani', 69, esp. n. 6; Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 4–5; Dursteler, 'Fatima Hatun', 356–7; Eugenio Albèri (ed.), *Relazioni di ambasciatori veneti al Senato*, 15 vols (Florence: Società editrice fiorentina, 1839–63), ix.298–9; Halil İnalcık, 'Kapı Aghası', in *EP*, vol. iv (1978), pp. 570–1.

¹⁴ Börekçi, 'Factions and Favorites', 48–63; Pedani, 'Safiye's Household', 27; Pedani-Fabris, 'Veneziani', 70, 82–4; Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 30–1; Dursteler, 'Fatima Hatun', 370–1; TNA, SP 97/4, fos. 201–202^v (Lello to Cecil, Constantinople, 10/20 Jan. 1602/3).

¹⁵ Pedani, 'Safiye's Household', 14 nn. 13 and 14.

¹⁶ Reindl-Kiel, 'Ende einer Kavaliersreise', 132; Stephen Fender, *Sea Changes: British Emigration and American Literature* (Cambridge: CUP, 1992), 155–7.

that he could afford such a building, even if perhaps only for rent, as well as the necessary staff.¹⁷

In 1591, Gazanfer's sister Beatrice Michiel, too, accepted the invitation to join her brother in Istanbul. Within a matter of days, Beatrice followed Gazanfer's example and embraced Islam, taking the name Fatima. Apparently, she initially lived at Topkapı Palace, before moving into her brother's residence. Her stay at Topkapı probably served the double purpose of keeping her close to the eunuch, who lived there and perhaps kept a property of his own for purely representative purposes, as well as acculturating her to her new surroundings.¹⁸ The Venetian woman quickly attained some standing in the harem and became an important element in her brother's system of alliances when she married one of his protégés, the Circassian Ali Ağa, whom Matteo Zane described as 'a scribe in the *divan*' (imperial council). The match further strengthened the political alliance between the two men.¹⁹

Beatrice's marriage to Ali was already her third. When her first husband had died in 1588, she had soon remarried a Venetian merchant named Zuane Zaghis. As Dursteler's painstaking reconstruction of Beatrice's biography shows, this marriage was troubled by conflicts over Zaghis' management of Beatrice's financial and family affairs, and particularly over her substantial dowry. Her conversion to Islam therefore, Dursteler has convincingly argued, was a chance for her to dissolve the troublesome nuptial bond with Zaghis. While the decision to convert granted Fatima freedom from her difficult husband and his involvement in her financial affairs, she remained under the authority of men, first her brother and then her new husband Ali. The freedom to decide her own fate, if she enjoyed it all, may therefore have been more fleeting than Dursteler has suggested.²⁰

Perhaps for this reason Fatima's relationship with her brother was less than smooth. Having returned from Istanbul in 1594, Bailo Zane informed the doge and senate:

¹⁷ Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 5; Pedani, 'Safiye's Household', 25. On the importance of representative buildings for grandees and their households, see Jane Hathaway, *The Politics of Household in Ottoman Egypt: The Rise of the Qazdağlıs* (Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization; Cambridge: CUP, 1997), 125.

¹⁸ Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 10; Dursteler, 'Fatima Hatun', 359–60; Pedani, 'Safiye's Household', 21, 25–6, esp. 26 n. 53.

¹⁹ Luigi Firpo (ed.), *Relazioni di ambasciatori veneti al Senato*, xiii: *Constantinopoli (1590–1793)* (Turin: Bottega d'Erasmus, 1984), 301; Albèri (ed.), *Relazioni*, ix.437; Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 19; Dursteler, 'Fatima Hatun', 366; Pedani, 'Safiye's Household', 26. On the centrality of women in political alliances, see Hathaway, *Politics of Household*, ch. 6; Leslie P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (Studies in Middle Eastern History; New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 65–72; Henning Sievert, *Zwischen arabischer Provinz und Hoher Pforte: Beziehungen, Bildung und Politik des osmanischen Bürokraten Râgib Mehmed Paşa (st. 1763)* (Kultur, Recht und Politik in muslimischen Gesellschaften, 11; Würzburg: Ergon, 2008), 340.

²⁰ Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 5–17, quotation from p. 16; Dursteler, 'Fatima Hatun', 358–9, 362–6. On divorce as a result of conversion, see Joseph Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (2nd edn, Oxford: OUP, 1966), 132–3. On the conversion of women and the issue of freedom versus the reinforcement of patriarchal power relations, Marc David Baer, 'Islamic Conversion Narratives of Women: Social Change and Gendered Religious Hierarchy in Early Modern Ottoman Istanbul', *Gender and History*, 16 (2004), 425–48.

since her brother the *kapı ağası* yearns for nothing as much as to bring this woman's two sons, who are in Venice, into the palace, because she is not having any others, she begs that they be nurtured and sheltered here so that they cannot be abducted, as her brother aspires to do.²¹

In spite of these pleas and warnings, Gazanfer at least partly succeeded in his ambition when, four years later, the Cypriot convert Zuanne Bustroni, another Ali Ağa, managed to abduct Giacomo Bianchi, the younger of the two sons, from his boarding school. Once in Istanbul, Giacomo embraced Islam, was henceforth known as Mehmed, and continued his training in Topkapı Palace. As a result of his uncle's fall from grace in 1603, Mehmed's career in Ottoman service was cut short, although he did have the dubious honour of being 'a boon companion of Sultan Murad IV' and present 'when the sultan drank himself to death during Ramadan of 1640'.²²

Maria Pia Pedani has shown that Gazanfer's relations with his family fit into a wider pattern among Venetian renegades in this period. Ömer Ağa, another eunuch and one of the *kapı ağası*'s clients, for instance, encouraged his mother as well as his sister and her husband to settle in Istanbul. All three of them soon converted to Islam, as did a friend of his mother's. In fact, Eric Dursteler has pointed out that, on occasion, the *baili* had to fight off entire families wanting to relocate to the Empire. Uluç Hasan, too, was joined by one of his nephews, Livio Celeste, who likewise converted to Islam.²³

Figure 5.1 is an extended version of Figure 4.2, adding family members and the information on kinship ties just discussed. The graph powerfully illustrates how prevalent this form of connecting with kin was among some of the Christian-European converts in the Ottoman elite. The underlying pattern resembles chain migration observed, for instance, in the settlement of 'guest workers' from South and South Eastern Europe in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland after the Second World War, even if it did not reach the same scale. Still, individuals like Gazanfer and Ömer provided the necessary contacts and local knowledge which made such migration possible, even desirable.²⁴

²¹ Firpo (ed.), *Relazioni*, xiii.302; Albèri (ed.), *Relazioni*, ix.438.

²² Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 26–8, quotation from p. 28; Dursteler, 'Fatima Hatun', 372; Pedani, 'Safiye's Household', 27. Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 28, mentions that Mehmed became 'bey of Kassandra, in Greece,' in 1633. This position was probably only titular, referring to the area from which the incumbent drew his income. In any case, according to Andreas Birken, *Die Provinzen des Osmanischen Reiches* (Beihefte zum Tübinger Atlas des vorderen Orients, 13; Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1976), 50 and 76, Kassandra (Turkish: Kessendire) was only a *kaza*, that is, a judicial district within the *sancak* of Edirne.

²³ Pedani-Fabris, 'Veneziani'; Pedani, 'Safiye's Household', 19–23; Eric R. Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 144; Antonio Fabris, 'Hasan "Il veneziano" tra Algeri e Costantinopoli', in Lucchetta (ed.), 'Veneziani a Costantinopoli', 60–1.

²⁴ I owe this insight to conversations with Olga Sparschuh and William O'Reilly. For general discussions of chain migration and an overview of the relevant literature, see Bin Yu, *Chain Migration Explained: The Power of the Immigration Multiplier* (The New Americans: Recent Immigration and American Society; New York: LFB Scholarly Publishing, 2008); Sonja Haug, *Soziales Kapital und Kettenmigration: Italienische Migranten in Deutschland* (Schriftenreihe des Bundesinstituts für Bevölkerungsforschung, 31; Opladen: Leske und Budrich, 2000).

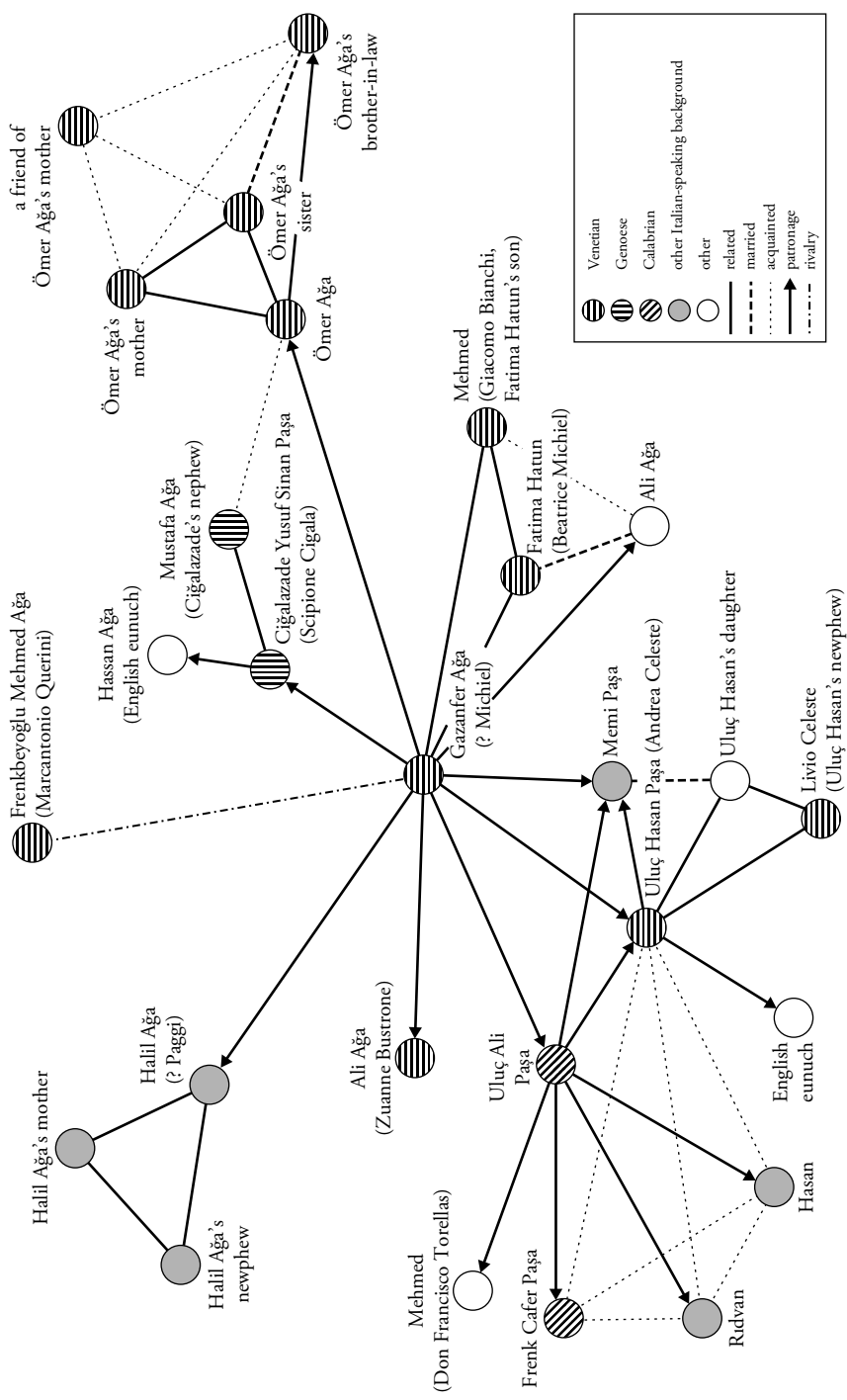


Figure 5.1. Family and patronage relationships between prominent Italian renegades in the Ottoman elite. This is an extension of Figure 4.2.

Such a pattern of migration to the Ottoman Empire was not unique to Venetian converts, of course. Ciğalazade's nephew likewise made his way to the sultan's domains where he became known as Mustafa Ağa.²⁵ Moreover, Stephan Gerlach's journal contains the story of the 'grand vizier's chief armourer', probably the director of the imperial armoury (*tophane-i 'amire*) in Istanbul, who invited his brother Martin Gruo to join him in the Ottoman capital. The two men are described as the sons of the Duke of Württemberg's chief armourer, another indication of professional continuities across political and religious borders. Martin was serving in Carniola (German: Krain, Hungarian: Krajna, Slovenian: Kranjska) when he received his brother's invitation and first sought the advice of his superiors there. They recommended that he accept, concluding that he would be able to obtain a substantial gift of money from the renegade since the latter was apparently neither married nor did he have children. So Martin travelled to Istanbul in the company of a furrier from Ljubljana (German: Laibach) who, as Gerlach put it, 'hoped to likewise receive two or three hundred ducats'. Soon after their arrival, however, Martin's brother 'began to request that they become Turks, telling them how well he was doing, that he had so much income from his *timar* [revenue grant] . . . and need not do anything but sit on his cushion'. Neither his personal solicitations nor those of others were to any avail, however. 'As they did not want to stay, [the renegade] became angry with them, saying that their departure would disgrace him before the Paşa and the other Turks.'²⁶

This final remark is suggestive. While attachment and concern for the well-being of their relatives were certainly powerful motives behind inviting family members to join them in the Ottoman Empire—in order to share the 'good life' with them, as it were—there may have been additional processes at work which had more to do with the internal dynamics of the Ottoman elite. Clearly, winning converts was no less a source of prestige for the sultan's servants than for the sultan himself. Perhaps more importantly, though, transplanting members of their families to the Ottoman Empire was one way for Christian-European converts to enlarge their households with faithful and loyal supporters and thus improve their relative standing in the constant jockeying for power and positions. Gazanfer clearly had no qualms about using his sister to cement the relationship with a promising client, especially since he could apparently choose between several suitors.²⁷ Finally, persuading one's family members to settle in the Ottoman Empire and, ideally, follow one's example in embracing Islam may have been a strategy for some renegades to demonstrate their loyalty to the Ottoman cause. Of course, we need to be careful not to read too much into such a short statement as the lamentation of Martin Gruo's renegade brother whose authenticity is in any case spurious. On the other hand, the possibility that such forms of migration and conversion would be demanded as proofs of loyalty is illustrated by the aspirations of Ciğalazade's younger brother Carlo Cigala to gain employment in the Ottoman Empire to which we shall turn shortly.

²⁵ Pedani-Fabris, 'Veneziani', 71.

²⁶ *Stephan Gerlachs dess aeltern Tage-Buch* (Frankfurt, 1674), 127–8.

²⁷ Pedani, 'Safiye's Household', 26; Dursteler, 'Fatima Hatun', 366; Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 19.

PROTECTION, PATRONAGE, AND PRESTIGE

Relocation to the Ottoman Empire was by no means a necessary prerequisite for families to enjoy their renegade relatives' aid and support. Those who remained resident in Christendom, too, could derive considerable benefits from their trans-imperial connections. When Gazanfer Ağa's mother returned to Venice after her first visit to the Ottoman capital in the early 1580s, she was not only granted an audience in the Senate—whose members were understandably curious about what she could tell them about her powerful son—but also received an income of ten ducats per month, presumably because of her son's rank in the Ottoman Empire. The eunuch's mother was not the only beneficiary. His sister Beatrice was given an even higher income from the Venetian state only one year later, once again because of the Michiels' connections with Gazanfer.²⁸

That this was not an isolated phenomenon, especially not among Venetian converts to Islam, becomes clear from the example of Uluç Hasan Paşa's family. Thanks to his intercession, his sister Camilla Celeste received an annual income of 100 ducats and a bakery from the Serenissima. Hasan, moreover, did not only help his sister in this way. He also petitioned the doge and senate to appoint her husband, Marcantonio Dalla Vedova, as a secretary to the senate—one of the most important offices in Venice and the highest position obtainable by a 'mere' citizen (as opposed to a patrician)—or, failing that, grant him a pension. In fact, Dalla Vedova had explicitly requested his brother-in-law's intervention during a visit to Istanbul in 1590, hoping to achieve membership in the closed Venetian nobility with Hasan's assistance or, at the very least, a lucrative job. The request, however, was unsuccessful, quite possibly because the senate may have feared that the then-*kapudan paşa's* brother-in-law, because of his family ties, was a potential leak who might relay Venetian state secrets to the Ottomans. In previous years, Uluç Hasan had repeatedly used his position as a governor-general in North Africa—as well as his reputation for cruelty—to obtain pardons for one of his brothers and his cousin Livio. On two separate occasions, Hasan also solicited the latter's release when he was arrested in Malta and Marseilles on the suspicion of being a spy after he had been exiled from Venice for illegal gambling.²⁹

Beatrice Michiel's second husband Zuane Zaghis sought the support of his Ottoman brother-in-law to an even greater extent than Dalla Vedova had attempted to solicit Uluç Hasan's intervention. Zaghis seems to have been 'particularly aggressive' in this respect, travelling to Istanbul soon after his wedding to Beatrice in order 'to profit from his new family's connections'.³⁰ Obviously, neither of these Venetian men considered their wives' Muslim relatives a cause for embarrassment. On the contrary, they clearly regarded them as legitimate sources of patronage.

²⁸ Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 5.

²⁹ Fabris, 'Hasan "Il veneziano"', 60–1, quotation from p. 61. On the Venetian emphasis on maintaining secrets, see Filippo de Vivo, *Information and Communication in Venice: Rethinking Early Modern Politics* (Oxford: OUP, 2007), esp. 51–2 on the dangers posed by secretaries in this respect.

³⁰ Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 8.

Fatima herself admitted that she had travelled to Istanbul at least in part because, as Eric Dursteler puts it, 'she was aware of the economic opportunities that her transfer would make available to her family.' Whether she had foreseen that this move would prompt a legal battle not only over the dissolution of her marriage to Zaghis but, perhaps more importantly, over his entitlement to her dowry, is impossible to answer on the basis of the available sources. In spite of her Venetian husband's resistance, however, the Senate eventually annulled the marriage. It does not seem entirely unreasonable that the decision was ultimately intended to protect, not so much Beatrice's personal financial interests, but rather those of her two sons Baldissare and Giacomo Bianchi who had remained in Venice. This possibility is suggested by Beatrice's pleas to Zane that her sons be 'nurtured and sheltered' in the Serenissima. This concern might also explain why the Senate, upon dissolving the marriage, assigned the income of 200 ducats from a Venetian office which Beatrice had been granted in 1589 to her sons and not to Zaghis, although the exact chain of causality is difficult to establish, since, at the behest of his sister, Gazanfer directly intervened in this matter.³¹

After Fatima's relocation to the Ottoman Empire, ensuring the well-being of her sons emerges as one of her prime concerns. Besides sending money and valuable goods to them, she sought to ensure that her incomes and assets in Venice would benefit her still under-age children directly, appointed guardians, and entrusted the Venetian merchant Pasqualin Leoni with the management of her estates on her sons' behalf. The arrangement was attractive for Leoni not least because it provided him with contacts to members of the imperial household and permitted him to participate in the lucrative luxury trade with the palace. Fatima herself and her new husband Ali Ağa were heavily invested in commercial relationships with Venetian merchants, making effective use of Fatima's contacts. In at least one instance she brokered a partnership for which substantial capital was raised from members of the palace household and even the sultan himself. That this investment eventually resulted in a substantial loss for all parties involved was certainly unfortunate. Of greater interest here, though, is the fact that Fatima formally contracted the partnership with the Venetian merchants on behalf of her sons, using them as a front, as it were, to give a veneer of legality and legitimacy to a venture which would have outrightly contradicted Venetian law, if the Ottoman investors had been formally recognized as partners. Fatima clearly understood how to play her trans-imperial status and connections.³²

Whether her only remaining son in Venice after 1600, Baldissare, ever invoked his trans-imperial links is not known. It may have played some small role in his success in brokering the marriage between his sister-in-law and Girolamo Alberti, who had been in Istanbul as a dragoman and secretary between 1582 and 1599 and

³¹ Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 8–18, 25, first quotation from p. 18; second quotation from Firpo (ed.), *Relazioni*, xiii.302; Albèri (ed.), *Relazioni*, ix.438.

³² Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 24–6, 32; Dursteler, 'Fatima Hatun', 369–70, 372–3. On the role of trans-imperial subjects as commercial brokers in Venice and similar trans-imperial ventures, see Rothman, *Brokering Empire*, esp. chs 1 and 2; Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople*, 114.

may therefore have known Baldissare's mother and uncle.³³ The value of this Ottoman connection in any case was removed quite dramatically when Gazanfer was executed. As a result, Fatima and her husband Ali Ağa, as the now unpopular (and, crucially, deceased) *kapı ağası*'s dependants, lost most of their former influence in the capital.³⁴

Nothing exemplifies Fatima/Beatrice Michiel's status as a trans-imperial subject better than her will. Within just a few months of each other, the Venetian convert and her son Baldissare died in 1613 and 1614, respectively. Since the latter had not left behind any children of his own, and since Mehmed/Giacomo continued to reside in the Ottoman Empire, in accordance with Fatima's will, her estate was transformed into a trust to support three of the most eminent charitable institutions in Venice: the Hospital of the Pietà as well as the nunneries of Santa Croce and the Convertite.³⁵ Against the background of the common stereotypes about renegades, it seems almost bizarre that a former Christian who had turned Muslim supported distinctly Christian organizations in this way. It is tempting, of course, to view these bequests as evidence of the insincerity of Beatrice's conversion to Islam. She certainly took care to present herself as a Christian at heart to the Venetian *baili*. Whether this display was sincere, however, we shall never know. Retaining the Serenissima's sympathy was at least of doubtless instrumental value, given her financial and commercial interests as well as her concern for the safety of her sons.³⁶ In any case, the endowments made in her will need not necessarily be understood as religiously motivated or even as 'penance' for having left Venice and her children, in the way suggested by Dursteler.³⁷ Perhaps more than patriotic sentiments, there was a pragmatic side to this particular form of charity: Where else could she have created a charitable endowment from properties situated and revenue generated in the Republic of Saint Mark? In spite of the close ties between Venice and the Ottoman Empire, it is unlikely that assigning these assets to a pious foundation (Ottoman Turkish: *vakf*, Arabic: *waqf*) such as a *medrese* (religious college), a library, or even a fountain in Istanbul would have been feasible. Although the trust set up in Venice is, of course, not technically a *vakf*, it followed principles similar to those underlying the institutions set up by Ottoman officials like Koca Sinan Paşa in the regions of their birth.³⁸ Venice being a dominantly Catholic city, as were consequently the majority of its civic institutions, the three

³³ Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 39.

³⁴ Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 29–32; Dursteler, 'Fatima Hatun', 371–2.

³⁵ Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 32–3; Dursteler, 'Fatima Hatun', 373; Pedani, 'Safiye's Household', 26–7.

³⁶ Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 20; Dursteler, 'Fatima Hatun', 360; Maria Pia Pedani-Fabris (ed.), *Relazioni di ambasciatori veneti al Senato*, xiv: *Relazioni inedite (1512–1789)* (Padua: Bottega d'Erasmo, 1996), 419; Firpo (ed.), *Relazioni*, xiii.301–2; Albèri (ed.), *Relazioni*, ix.437–8.

³⁷ Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 33; Dursteler, 'Fatima Hatun', 373.

³⁸ R. Peters et al., 'Wakf', in *EP*, vol. xi (2002), pp. 59–67; Colin Imber, *Ebu's-Su'ud: The Islamic Legal Tradition* (Jurists: Profiles in Legal Theory; Stanford, CA: SUP, 1997), 140–1; Metin İ. Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550–1650* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 54–6; Klaus Schwarz and Hars Kurio, *Die Stiftungen des osmanischen Großwesirs Koşa Sinân Pascha (gest. 1596) in Uzunğaova/Bulgarien* (Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, 80; Berlin: Schwarz, 1983), esp. 2–8.

institutions she chose for her benefaction were in many ways obvious choices since they were among the most popular recipients of bequests.³⁹

In this respect, it is revealing that Fatima chose *not* to leave a bequest to the Pia Casa dei Catecumeni. Since the latter instructed potential converts from Judaism and Islam in the fundamentals of Catholicism and aided their integration into Venetian society, supporting this institution would have been a more telling choice for a repentant New Muslim who sought reconciliation with the Catholic Church.⁴⁰ Fatima's bequests, therefore, were in all likelihood more an expression of civic and charitable sentiments than Christian devotion, regret, and repentance. In the last analysis, Fatima's testament illustrates her ability to be at home on both sides of the Venetian–Ottoman frontier. Of course, one might argue that such a lenient and pragmatic approach to the vagaries of life and religious belonging came more easily to inhabitants of the Republic of Venice, which in any case had entertained close ties with the Ottomans from the Empire's very beginnings. But the impression that this was primarily a Venetian phenomenon is a result of the present state of historical scholarship. So far, Venetians have simply been best studied in this respect.

THE CIGALA FAMILY AS TRANS-IMPERIAL NOBILITY

The Cigala family clearly shows that such an approach to relatives who had 'turned Turk' was shared elsewhere. In 1593, Çiğalazade's younger brother Carlo had followed the *kapudan paşa's* invitation to visit him in Istanbul. News of his journey instantly gave rise to the rumour that Carlo had been dispatched to the capital at Madrid's behest in order to breathe new life into negotiations for a truce between the King of Spain and the Porte which had been stalling for years.⁴¹ The true purpose of this visit, however, was almost certainly a family reunion. In any case,

³⁹ Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 32–3; Dursteler, 'Fatima Hatun', 373; Mary Laven, *Virgins of Venice: Broken Vows and Cloistered Lives in the Renaissance Convent* (New York: Viking, 2002), 69–70, 77–8, and 215 n. 13.

⁴⁰ Rothman, *Brokering Empire*, ch. 4, esp. pp. 124–8 for the institutional background; Lucia Rostagno, *Mi faccio turco: Esperienze ed immagini dell'islam nell'Italia moderna (Oriente Moderno, supplement no. 1; Studi e materiali sulla conoscenza dell'oriente in Italia, 4; Rome: Istituto per l'orienta C. A. Nallino, 1983), 44–5.*

⁴¹ *CSP Venice*, ix.75, no. 170 (Matteo Zane to the Doge and Senate of Venice, Constantinople, 18 May 1593); ix.75–6, no. 172 (Zane to Doge and Senate, Constantinople, 24 May 1593); ix.96–7, no. 197 (Zane to Doge and Senate, Constantinople, 2 Aug. 1593), at p. 97; HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for 1593 May–June, fo. 54^{r–v} (Friedrich von Kreckwitz to Archduke Matthias, Constantinople, 19 May 1593, enciphered), at fo. 54^v; British Library, Cotton MSS, Nero B.XII, fo. 12^r (Barton to William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Constantinople, 23 Dec. 1593/2 Jan. 1594); Salvatore Pappalardo, 'Ambizione politica, commercio e diplomazia alla fine del XVI secolo: Carlo Cicala', in Daniele Andreozzi, Loredana Panariti, and Claudio Zaccaria (eds), *Acque, terre e spazi dei mercanti: Istituzioni, gerarchie, conflitti e pratiche dello scambio dall'età antica alla modernità* (Trieste: Editreg, 2009), 147–8; Emrah Safa Gürkan, 'Espionage in the 16th Century Mediterranean: Secret Diplomacy, Mediterranean Go-Betweens and the Ottoman Habsburg Rivalry', PhD dissertation, Georgetown University, Washington, DC, 2012, 118, 175–6.

Carlo reassured Bailo Matteo Zane 'that he is here on his own private business alone'.⁴² What this 'private business' was, is revealed in Zane's *relazione*:

the said Signore Carlo... was indulging in the belief that he could easily be given charge of Moldavia or Wallachia by paying the usual pension to the Porte. And when this turned out unsuccessful he hatched the idea of having the islands of the Archipelago in imitation of the [sultan's] Jewish favourite Giovanni Miches [Joseph Nasi].⁴³

In other words, during his visit to Istanbul, Carlo Cigala offered himself to the Ottoman sultan. That an Italian in the service of the king of Spain should strive to emulate, of all things, the example of Joseph Nasi is a striking reflection of the ambiguities and ambivalences which European Christians displayed towards Jews in this period. Nasi and his family belonged to the large group of *conversos*, Jews who had been forcefully converted to Christianity and their descendants, who were subsequently persecuted for alleged crypto-Judaism and, more generally, the 'taint' of having Jewish blood. Because of such persecution, Nasi had to flee his native Portugal, taking up residence elsewhere in Europe before he finally settled in the Ottoman Empire in the mid-sixteenth century where he openly returned to Judaism. Nasi attached himself to the future Sultan Selim II whose favourite he became and who rewarded him, among other things, with the duchy of Naxos.⁴⁴ Although Carlo had thus arrived in Istanbul with high hopes, they remained unfulfilled for the time being. After several months, he returned to Messina empty handed because 'his brother the Capudan... [would] not support him'.⁴⁵

It was to take another five years and another sultan to bring Carlo closer to his dream. In 1598, Mehmed III ordered the Sicilian to 'go to the aforesaid Duchy of Naxos and enjoy and govern it in your lifetime'.⁴⁶ Although this quotation appears not in an Ottoman original, but in a contemporary Italian translation taken from the archives of Venice, Joshua White, who has had the chance of comparing a number of Venetian copies and translations of Ottoman documents with originals in Istanbul, concludes that they are generally faithful. The text's authenticity is also

⁴² *CSP Venice*, ix.98, no. 198 (Zane to Doge and Senate, Constantinople, 3 Aug. 1593).

⁴³ Firpo (ed.), *Relazioni*, xiii.295–6; Albèri (ed.), *Relazioni*, ix.431–2. See also Benzoni, 'Cicala, Scipione', 326–7; M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, 'Cigala-zâde', in *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, 13 vols (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1940–88), iii.163.

⁴⁴ On the ambivalent status of Jews in early modern Europe, see, for example, Daniel Jütte, *Das Zeitalter des Geheimnisses: Juden, Christen und die Ökonomie des Geheimen (1400–1800)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2011); García-Arenal and Wiegers, *Man of Three Worlds*. The literature on Nasi is extensive. Good starting points are Cecil Roth, *The House of Nasi: The Duke of Naxos* (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1948); Benjamin Arbel, *Trading Nations: Jews and Venetians in the Early Modern Eastern Mediterranean* (Brill's Series in Jewish Studies, 14; Leiden: Brill, 1995), 55–61; Emrah Safa Gürkan, 'Touting for Patrons, Brokering Power, and Trading Information: Trans-Imperial Jews in Sixteenth-Century Istanbul', in Emilio Sola Castaño and Gennaro Varriale (eds), *Detrás de las apariencias: Información y espionaje (siglos XVI–XVII)* (Alcalá de Henares: Universidad de Alcalá, 2015), esp. 129 n. 7 for an overview of available scholarship.

⁴⁵ *CSP Venice*, ix.106, no. 217 (Zane to Doge and Senate, Constantinople, 19 Sept. 1593).

⁴⁶ Ilario Rinieri, 'Clemente VIII e Sinan Bassà Cicala: Secondo documenti inediti', pt 6, *La Civiltà Cattolica*, series 16, 11/1132 (11 Aug. 1897), 411–12 (command of Sultan Mehmed III to Carlo Cigala, Constantinople, 15 Rabî' II 1007/15 Nov. 1598).

suggested by its close correspondence to the Ottoman diplomatics of *berats*, diplomas of appointment.⁴⁷

The island of Naxos had only formally become part of the Ottoman Empire in 1566, although the previous rulers of the Crispo family had repeatedly paid tribute, while the Veneto-Ottoman treaty of 1540 had established Ottoman suzerainty over the island. After its formal annexation by the Porte, Sultan Selim II invested his Jewish favourite Joseph Nasi with the dukedom, yet it was not until after his death in 1579 that Naxos became fully integrated into the Ottoman administrative system as a *sancak* (district) subordinate to the *kapudan paşa*. Even then, however, Naxos remained somewhat unusual as most of Nasi's successors were not Muslim *kapıkulu* (literally: slaves of the Porte), but Rumelian Christians such as Constantine Cantacuzino and the Croatian Gasparo Gratiani.⁴⁸ Still, the choice of Carlo, as a subject of the sultan's most powerful rival in the Mediterranean, was remarkable.

Apparently, the *kapudan paşa* had continued to petition the sultan for this office on his brother's behalf.⁴⁹ On 24 April 1600, almost one and a half years after Mehmed III had issued the command for Carlo's appointment, Cığalazade reassured his brother, 'In response to your letters I will tell you that I have obtained the favour of the most felicitous Grand Signor so that, for my love, you can have Naxos with the other islands in the same manner as Rabbi Joseph Nasi the Jew.'⁵⁰ The appointment, however, was tied to a sensitive condition. Surprisingly, this was not a demand that Carlo follow his brother's example and 'turn Turk', but that he 'bring, without delay and hesitation, your mother', Lucrezia Cigala, to Ottoman territory. This stipulation is repeated three times in the relatively short text.⁵¹

Why was it so important to the sultan that the Cigalas' mother moved to the Ottoman Empire? The answer partly lies in the customs associated with the appointment of new voivodes in the vassal principality of Moldavia. In order to ensure their loyalty, the Porte obliged the new voivode to surrender at least one close family member as a hostage. Since, prior to the eighteenth century, the princes were selected from among eligible Moldavian families, this form of insurance made sense, even if it was far from reliable. The per se not unreasonable expectation was

⁴⁷ Joshua Michael White, 'Catch and Release: Piracy, Slavery, and Law in the Early Modern Ottoman Mediterranean', PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 2012, 65; Ludwig Fekete, *Einführung in die osmanisch-türkische Diplomatie der türkischen Botmäßigkeit in Ungarn* (Budapest: Veröffentlichungen des Königlichen Ungarischen Staatsarchivs, 1926), pp. xlvii–xlviii, also compare the document on pp. 28–9. I am grateful to Gábor Kármán and Henning Sievert for bringing this correspondence to my attention.

⁴⁸ A. Savvides, 'Naḳṣhe', in *EP*, vol. vii (1993), p. 940; Arbel, *Trading Nations*, 56; Benjamin J. Slot, *Archipelagus turbatus: Les Cyclades entre colonisation latine et occupation ottomane, c. 1500–1718*, 2 vols (Istanbul: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul, 1982), vol. i, chs 5 and 6; Gürkan, 'Touting for Patrons', 128 n. 5. On the history of the duchy of the archipelago from its establishment in the thirteenth century until its annexation by the Ottomans, see Charles and Kathleen Frazee, *The Island Princes of Greece: The Dukes of the Archipelago* (Amsterdam: Hakker, 1988), esp. chs 5 and 6 on the Crispo dynasty.

⁴⁹ Firpo (ed.), *Relazioni*, xiii.296; Albèri (ed.), *Relazioni*, ix.432.

⁵⁰ Rinieri, 'Clemente VIII e Sinan Bassà Cicala', pt 6, 416–17 (Cığalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa to Carlo Cigala, Constantinople, 24 Apr. 1600), quotation from p. 416.

⁵¹ Rinieri, 'Clemente VIII e Sinan Bassà Cicala', pt 6, 411–12 (command of Mehmed III to Carlo Cigala, 15 Rabi' II 1007/15 Nov. 1598).

that a voivode was more likely to conduct himself in accordance with the sultan's wishes, if the latter had the credible option of exacting punishment on his kin. Hostage taking, therefore, was to serve as a counterweight to any alliances with, and ties to, other rulers, particularly the Holy Roman Emperor.⁵² Arguably, the sultan and his advisers deemed it prudent to demand the relocation of the Cigalas' mother to the Ottoman Empire in order to offset Carlo's earlier ties of political loyalty to Spain and thereby preventing the Spanish crown from enforcing a similar claim to the man's loyalty through the mother's continued residence in Sicily. Up to a point, the idea behind this demand was akin to the fundamental logic behind the formation of the *kapıkulu* and recruitment to this group through the *devşirme* among the Christian population. In both cases, the aim was to significantly weaken, if not to totally eradicate, the local ties and loyalties of recruits and replace them with dependence on the sultan for wealth, power, prestige, and, ultimately, their lives.

In Carlo's case, the demand to bring his mother into Ottoman territory had special significance above and beyond the need for a hostage to ensure good behaviour. For Lucrezia 'was a Turk, taken captive by his father in Castelnovo' (present-day Herceg Novi in Montenegro) who had long since converted to Christianity.⁵³ Mehmed III's order therefore emphasizes his duty as the protector of Islam and Islamic law which, in turn, heightens the importance of the sultan's demand precisely as a test of loyalty for a future servant of the Ottoman realm who would be charged with upholding Ottoman law, including the enforcement of the prescriptions concerning apostasy.⁵⁴ Clearly, Carlo would only be worthy of his post if he put his obligation to the sultan above even his filial loyalties.

⁵² On the formal aspects of the appointment of the voivodes of Moldavia, see Viorel Panaite, "... Our Reign Is Granted by the Turks . . .": Ottoman Sultans and Tributary Voivodas of Wallachia and Moldavia (Sixteenth–Seventeenth Centuries), in Maria Baramova et al. (eds), *Power and Influence in South-Eastern Europe: 16–19th Century* (Geschichte: Forschung und Wissenschaft, 38; Berlin: Lit, 2013), 177–89 which does not mention the practice of hostages, though. For brief histories of the principality, especially under Ottoman suzerainty, consult Sándor Papp, 'Moldavia (Ger.: Moldau; Rom.: Moldova; Turk.: Kara Boğdan)', in *EOE*, 389–91; Ekkehard Völkel, 'Moldau', in Edgar Hösch, Karl Nehring, and Holm Sundhaussen (eds), *Lexikon zur Geschichte Südosteuropas* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2004), 453–5; Halil İnalcık, 'Boğhdân', in *EP*, vol. i (1960), pp. 1252–3.

⁵³ Firpo (ed.), *Relazioni*, xiii.343; *CSP Venice*, ix.98, no. 198 (Zane to Doge and Senate, Constantinople, 3 Aug. 1593); British Library, Cotton MSS, Nero B.XII, fo. 11v (Barton to Burghley, Constantinople, 23 Dec. 1593/2 Jan. 1594); Gino Benzoni, 'Cicala, Visconte', in Ghisalberti and Pavan (eds), *Dizionario biografico*, xxv.345; Domenico Montuoro, 'I Cigala, una famiglia feudale tra Genova, Sicilia, Turchia e Calabria', *Mediterranea: Ricerche Storiche*, 6 (2009), 280–1.

⁵⁴ For the Ottoman claim to religious legitimacy as successors to the caliphate, see Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300–1650: The Structure of Power* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 125–6; Imber, 'Ideals and Legitimation in Early Ottoman History', in Metin İ. Kunt and Christine Woodhead (eds), *Süleyman the Magnificent and His Age: The Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern World* (Harlow: Longman, 1995), 152–3; Imber, 'Süleyman as Caliph of the Muslims: Ebû's-Su'ûd's Formulation of Ottoman Dynastic Ideology', in Gilles Veinstein (ed.), *Soliman le Magnifique et son temps: Actes du colloque de Paris, Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, 7–10 mars 1990* (Rencontres de l'Ecole du Louvre, 9; Paris: Ecole du Louvre, 1992), 179–84; Imber, 'Frozen Legitimacy', in Hakan T. Karateke and Maurus Reinkowski (eds), *Legitimizing the Order: The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 34; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 106; Hakan T. Karateke, 'Legitimizing the Ottoman Sultanate: A Framework for Historical Analysis', in Karateke and Reinkowski (eds), *Legitimizing the Order*, 25–31; Gilles Veinstein, 'Religious Institutions, Policies

Against this background it is surprising that the *berat* for Carlo's appointment makes no explicit mention of the expectation that he convert to Islam. When he had visited his brother in Istanbul in 1593, Matteo Zane had reported that

there are some who are seeking a decision from the Mufti [of Istanbul, i.e. the *şeyhülislam*] on this point, whether it is lawful to use force to compel the son of a Turkish woman, born at Castel Nuovo, carried slave into Christendom, to return to Islam, which is precisely the case of Signor Carlo Cicalla.

Interestingly, Zane's summary of the legal issue at stake closely mirrors the kind of abstractions commonly used in *fetvas* (legal opinions, Arabic: *fatāwā*, sg. *fatwā*). Carlo himself, as Edward Barton reported in December 1593, 'fears that he will be forced to convert to Islam'.⁵⁵

In any case, Carlo never assumed the promised post. Although he returned to the Ottoman Empire, notably to Chios, in 1600, he did so without his mother. In addition, he quickly attempted to renegotiate the terms of his appointment in order to achieve the removal of the local Muslim judge (*kadı*) from the island. His brother correctly considered this undertaking 'impossible because it would be an action contrary to the law which the scholars [the *ulema*] here would not tolerate. It is enough that you have the islands without the [*sancakbeyi* (district governor)], whom I will not replace with another.' Carlo did not, however, heed his brother's advice, informing him that the permission for settlement on the Cyclades which he had received from Philip III was conditional on the *kadı*'s removal from Naxos.⁵⁶ That Carlo had obtained permission for his enterprise from the Spanish crown is surprising. The fact that he had even felt the need to seek it, moreover, speaks volumes about where his loyalties really lay. It is no surprise, therefore, that in the end the scheme came to naught as the *kapudan paşa*'s brother was unable—and probably even unwilling—to convince the sultan of his undivided loyalty to him.⁵⁷ In spite of this setback, Carlo did not give up. In 1630, more than two decades after his brother's death, he returned to Istanbul in an unsuccessful attempt to secure the appointment of one his sons to the principalities of Moldavia or Wallachia with the aid of his nephew Mahmud Paşa.⁵⁸

Carlo's attempts to be invested with the duchy of Naxos and gain appointment as a vassal prince for his son needs to be seen in the context of what was a life-long and ambitious quest for social advancement in which his elder brother Cığalazade

and Lives', in Suraiya N. Faroqi and Kate Fleet (eds), *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, ii: *The Ottoman Empire as a World Power, 1453–1603* (Cambridge: CUP, 2013), 325–6.

⁵⁵ CSP Venice, ix.98, no. 198 (Zane to Doge and Senate, Constantinople, 3 Aug. 1593); TNA, SP 97/2, pt 2, fo. 223^{r-v} (Edward Barton to Thomas Heneage, Constantinople, 21 Nov./1 Dec. 1593), at fo. 223^r; Levent Kaya Ocakaçan, 'Cığalazade Yusuf Sinan Pasha (c. 1545–1606)', *Mediterranea: Recherche Storiche*, 12 (2015), 334, 336; Gürkan, 'Espionage', 18.

⁵⁶ Rinieri, 'Clemente VIII e Sinan Bassà Cicala', pt 6, 417–18 (Girolamo Capello to the Doge and Senate, Constantinople, 20 May 1600). Carlo had evidently obtained permission for his move to Naxos from Philip III as well as Pope Clement VIII. See Pappalardo, 'Ambizione', 156.

⁵⁷ Benzoni, 'Cicala, Scipione', 334–5.

⁵⁸ Benzoni, 'Cicala, Scipione', 326; Benzoni, 'Cicala, Visconte', 345; Pappalardo, 'Ambizione', 164–5.

played a crucial role. At the very least, Carlo hoped to derive a measure of prestige from his brother's exalted position in the sultan's service. That he consciously played on this family connection in his dealings with Christian-European rulers is evident, for instance, in a letter which he sent to Queen Elizabeth I in 1601 concerning reparations for losses caused to his ships and the goods they carried at the hands of English pirates in the Mediterranean. Within four short pages, he explicitly invoked 'my brother the Captain Paşa' no less than six times. In addition, he repeatedly emphasized that the ships had been seized even though their captains in each case had made it clear that they were not only travelling under a safe conduct issued by the *kapudan paşa*, but were, in fact, Genoese and therefore belonged to fellow Christians. Tellingly, the letter also reveals that 'my brother the Paşa [had] bought me' one of the ships in question.⁵⁹

Carlo gave up his aspirations in the Aegean only after Cigalazade's death. In the meantime, he maintained a second domicile on the island of Chios in addition to his house in Messina where his wife, Beatrice de Guidici, the daughter of a Messinese baron, had remained with their children. The younger Cigala enjoyed considerable standing not only in Sicily; his letter to Elizabeth I bears the signature 'Count Carlo Cigala' ('il Conte Carlo Cigala'), a title which he had obtained from Emperor Rudolf II in December 1597. Twice, in 1597–8 and again in 1608–9, he acted as head of one of the most prestigious confraternities in Messina, the Arciconfraternita degli Azzurri.⁶⁰ In addition, as Carlo's letter to Queen Elizabeth suggests, he and his family held significant investments in trade and finance in the Mediterranean. In 1610, the proceeds from these undertakings enabled him to buy the baronage of Tiriolo in Calabria, thus establishing him, in addition to Genoa, Sicily, and the Holy Roman Empire, among the peerage of the Kingdom of Naples.⁶¹ Three years later, like his father before him, he was admitted to the Order of Saint James of the Sword. This admission was made possible only by special dispensation from Pope Clement VIII because of the Ottoman-Muslim origins of Carlo's mother.⁶² Given Saint James's symbolic importance in the Reconquista of the Iberian Peninsula from the Moors and the order's purpose of

⁵⁹ TNA, SP 93/1, fos. 6^r–7^v (Carlo Cigala to Queen Elizabeth I, Messina, 17 July 1601), quotations from fo. 7^r.

⁶⁰ Benzoni, 'Cicala, Visconte', 345; Montuoro, 'I Cigala', 294; Pappalardo, 'Ambizione', 146–7, 153, 160–1; Gürkan, 'Espionage', 175–6. On Carlo's promotion to the rank of an Imperial count, see Jan Paul Niederkorn, 'Das "negotium secretum" der Familie Cicala', *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung*, 101 (1993), 432. A copy of the original diploma has survived along with Carlo's letter of thanks in Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv, Vienna, Adelsakten, Reichsadelsakten, box 65, no. 30. The quotation of the signature is taken from TNA, SP 93/1, fos. 6^r–7^v (Carlo Cigala to Elizabeth I, Messina, 17 July 1601), at fo. 7^v.

⁶¹ Montuoro, 'I Cigala', 295; Pappalardo, 'Ambizione', 160–1. On Carlo's economic activities, see Montuoro, 'I Cigala', 295–8; Pappalardo, 'Ambizione', 153–4, as well as a number of memorials concerning incidents of piracy suffered by Carlo Cigala and his mother Lucrezia in SP 94/14, pt 2, fos. 272^r–287^v. Carlo may even have tried to act as a ransoming agent at one point. See Pappalardo, 'Ambizione', 160, and compare Daniel Hershenzon, '[P]ara Que Me Saque Cabela por Cabela . . .': Exchanging Muslim and Christian Slaves across the Western Mediterranean', *African Economic History*, 42 (2014), 11–36.

⁶² Benzoni, 'Cicala, Visconte', 345; Montuoro, 'I Cigala', 280–1; Niederkorn, 'Negotium secretum', 434; Pappalardo, 'Ambizione', 153.

protecting pilgrims and fighting Muslims, it is more than a little ironic that Carlo, who had striven so hard to benefit from his connections to the Ottoman Empire, should have become part of it. Finally, in 1630, Philipp IV of Spain elevated him to the rank of a prince.⁶³ Even now, the Ottoman Empire remained a land of opportunity for Carlo and his offspring, as evinced by his attempt to obtain the principality of Moldavia or Wallachia for one of his sons in the same year. Venetian observers commented that this move was intended 'most of all to satisfy the parents of an eminent woman from Bohemia meant to marry that same son of his', another trans-imperial connection in the making. Carlo died a few months after this visit on 26 July 1631, aged 75.⁶⁴ The historian Gino Benzoni concluded that the *kapudan paşa's* younger brother,

throughout his long existence, was the jealous custodian of his family's prestige, fond of pomp and splendour and no stranger to restless and devious ambitions for grandeur as well as risky intrigues in order to fulfil them (intrigues which were tightly connected to the biography of his brother Scipione, yet not stopped by his famous brother's death in 1606...).⁶⁵

The available evidence suggests that Scipione and Carlo understood themselves as trans-imperial nobility. This conception need not have been shared by their brother Filippo or their Jesuit cousins Antonio and Vincenzo. Yet even the careers of the latter in the Vatican profited from the renegade *paşa* when Pope Clement VIII made use of them for a number of special diplomatic missions, including one directed at the *kapudan* himself.⁶⁶

In Scipione's case, his identification as a trans-imperial nobleman is brought into focus by his Ottoman name. The epithet (*nisbe*) continued to identify him by his ancestry as Cigaloğlu or, in the Persianate form preferred in the Ottoman high literary style, Cigalazade, which literally means 'son of Cigala'. It thus resembled the naming patterns adopted by converts to Islam from the Byzantine and Balkan nobilities such as Hersekzade Ahmed and Dukaginzade Ahmed Paşas in the mid-fifteenth century. In Cigalazade's case, the name stuck at least for another generation. His son Mahmud, who became a vizier in 1612 and married a daughter of Murad III the same year, bore the same *nisbe*.⁶⁷ Not only that, the Istanbul quarter

⁶³ Benzoni, 'Cicala, Visconte', 342, 345; Niederkorn, 'Negotium secretum', 434; Montuoro, 'I Cigala', 281, 299. On St James, see J. A. Lefrançois, 'James (Son of Zebedee), St.', in B. L. Marthaler (ed.), *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 15 vols (2nd edn, Detroit: Thomson/Gale and Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 2003), vii.701; Eduoard Urech, *Dizionario dei simboli cristiani*, tr. Paolo Piazzesi and France Fiorentino Piazzesi (Rome: Edizioni Arkeios, 1994), s.v. 'Giacomo (santo)', pp. 112–13.

⁶⁴ As quoted in Benzoni, 'Cicala, Visconte', 345. See also Montuoro, 'I Cigala', 299, 300.

⁶⁵ Benzoni, 'Cicala, Visconte', 345. Compare the assessment in Niederkorn, 'Negotium secretum', 434.

⁶⁶ Benzoni, 'Cicala, Scipione', 334–5; Montuoro, 'I Cigala', 279, 290, 292; Pappalardo, 'Ambizione', 144–6, 153; Ilario Rinieri, 'Clemente VIII e Sinan Bassà Cicala: Secondo documenti inediti', pt 1, *La Civiltà Cattolica*, series 16, 9/1122 (12 Mar. 1897), 700; Pedani-Fabris (ed.), *Relazioni inedite*, 410. On Vincenzo Cigala's missions, see Rinieri, 'Clemente VIII e Sinan Bassà Cicala: Secondo documenti inediti', pt 7, *La Civiltà Cattolica*, series 16, 11/1134 (6 Sept. 1897), 653–63.

⁶⁷ Benzoni, 'Cicala, Visconte', 320; A. D. Alderson, *The Structure of the Ottoman Dynasty* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), table XXXII; Baki Tezcan, 'Searching for Osman: A Reassessment of the

of Cağaloğlu derives its name from the fact that Cığalazade's palace had been situated in this part of the city.⁶⁸ For Scipione, conversion to Islam to all intents and purposes was therefore not so much a new beginning, but a step forward. In this respect, too, his appointment to the *kapudanlık* appears as signs of continuity of sorts with his father's career as a Christian corsair.

Similarly, Carlo's attempts to be advanced in office, rank, and reputation bespeak his trans-imperial ambitions. Perhaps for him, this trans-imperial dimension was simple opportunism: he happened to have a brother who was a high-ranking member of the Ottoman elite and whom he could use for leverage. In any case, for a subject of the Spanish crown to seek an appointment from its political and ideological arch rival was potentially extremely dangerous; even if he never had any intention of embracing Islam, Carlo's mere attempts to enter the sultan's employment might easily have been construed as treason. Of course even Carlo's ambitions had limits. While he was willing to capitalize on his Ottoman brother and become an Ottoman vassal, his desire to remain part of the Christian-European nobility made him stop short of actually becoming *Osmanlı*, with everything this status implied.

One wonders what role their mother Lucrezia's origins played in all this. In principle, she too was a trans-imperial subject. Did her experience of captivity and conversion force her to cut all ties to her past? Did she share memories of her childhood with her own children? Did she perhaps even teach them Turkish or whatever other languages she herself would have grown up with? And if so, did knowledge of his mother's origins inform Scipione's decision to embrace Islam and begin training in the sultan's palace? How much choice did she even have in the matter of passing her heritage on to her children? For all we know, by the time Lucrezia appeared in the records in the late sixteenth century, she was a 'good Christian' although the examples I have discussed in this chapter make it extremely unlikely that she would have abandoned all vestiges of her birth.⁶⁹

On the whole, the Cigalas' story has numerous parallels to that of the Michiels of Venice. This is perhaps not surprising since both families originated in similar political and social environments, namely Italian city-states with similar colonial and imperial experiences, even if Venice had long since outdone her great rival Genoa. The respective imperial enterprises had not only brought both cities and their representatives into close contact with the Ottomans from the early days of the latter's expansion, they had also established them as key Mediterranean players. The duchy of Naxos, after all, had originally been created in the thirteenth century

Deposition of the Ottoman Sultan Osman II (1618–1622)', PhD dissertation, Princeton University, 2001, 338 n. 87; Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (Cambridge: CUP, 2006), 74, 96. On similar *nisbes* in the previous century, see Heath W. Lowry, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State* (SUNY Series in the Social and Economic History of the Middle East; Albany: SUNY Press, 2003), 117–18, 127.

⁶⁸ Gökbilgin, 'Cığala-zâde', 164; Klaus Kreiser, *Istanbul: Ein historischer Stadtführer* (2nd edn, Munich: Beck, 2009), 20.

⁶⁹ Firpo (ed.), *Relazioni*, xiii.343.

by the son of a Venetian doge.⁷⁰ In this sense, therefore, Carlo's ambitions in the Aegean harked back to his Genoese roots.

Oscillating between the Spanish king and the sultan, moreover, essentially mirrors the behaviour of other Genoese noblemen who changed allegiance between rival monarchs. The best example of this is Andrea Doria, the famous Genoese admiral, who had begun his career in the service of Francis I, when Genoa had been a vassal of the French crown. As a result of the wars between the French crown and Emperor Charles V, the city changed hands several times in the 1520s. In 1528, Doria decided to side with the Emperor to become the celebrated admiral of the Imperial fleet in the Mediterranean. After his death, moreover, the job passed to his nephew and adopted son Gian Andrea.⁷¹ To be sure, trying to enter the service of the sultan was a considerably more dramatic step in light of the prevailing representation of 'the Turks' as the religious, rather than a purely political, arch-enemy. But in the end this was a natural extension of precedents established throughout Europe of noblemen—such as Doria, Prince Eugene of Savoy, or Comte de Bonneval—serving in courts abroad.⁷² Admittedly, such a measure of pragmatism may have come more easily to individuals of certain status, which is a powerful reminder of the cosmopolitanism of European elites, including that of the Ottoman Empire, in the early modern period. In the end, Carlo's attempts to launch trans-imperial careers for himself and his sons demonstrate the extent to which Christian Europe and the Ottoman Empire, religious antagonisms and political rivalries notwithstanding, were part of a shared world.

AN 'ITALIAN' PHENOMENON?

The stories so far recounted in this chapter raise the obvious question of whether these are singular examples or, in fact, representative of a wider phenomenon. Perhaps the most disconcerting issue is that most of the known evidence of such contacts and interactions with relatives 'back home' comes from the Venetian

⁷⁰ Savvides, 'Nakshe', 939–40; Slot, *Archipelagus turbatus*, vol. i, chs 2 and 3, as well as pp. 35–7 on the creation of the duchy of Naxos; Frazee and Frazee, *Island Princes*, ch. 1; Kate Fleet, *European and Islamic Trade in the Early Ottoman State: The Merchants of Genoa and Turkey* (Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization; Cambridge: CUP, 1999), 9–12, 122–33.

⁷¹ Christine Isom-Verhaaren, *Allies with the Infidel: The Ottoman and French Alliance in the Sixteenth Century* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011), 74–6; Edoardo Grendi, 'Doria, Andrea', in Ghisalberti and Pavan (eds), *Dizionario biografico*, xli.264–74; Rodolfo Savelli, 'Doria, Giovanni Andrea (Gian Andrea)', in Ghisalberti and Pavan (eds), *Dizionario biografico*, xli.361–75.

⁷² Christine Isom-Verhaaren, 'Shifting Identities: Foreign State Servants in France and the Ottoman Empire', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 8 (2004), 109–34; Isom-Verhaaren, *Allies with the Infidel*, ch. 2; Derek McKay, *Prince Eugene of Savoy* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977); Otto Stradal, *Der andere Prinz Eugen: Vom Flüchtling zum Multimillionär* (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1986); Felix Konrad, 'Soziale Mobilität europäischer Renegaten im frühneuzeitlichen Osmanischen Reich', in Henning P. Jürgens and Thomas Weller (eds), *Religion und Mobilität: Zum Verhältnis von raumbezogener Mobilität und religiöser Identitätsbildung im frühneuzeitlichen Europa* (Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte, Mainz, Beiheft 81; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2010), 226–7.

archives and concerns converts of Italian—and, unsurprisingly, among them primarily Venetian—provenance.

In this context, the explicit invocation of Joseph Nasi in the context of Carlo Cigala's attempts to obtain the duchy of Naxos is particularly meaningful. For the Cigalas' manoeuvres across geographic, political, and religious boundaries closely mirror those of Iberian Jews like the Nasis and, even more closely, the Pallache family. Like Carlo and Scipione—and quite probably their cousins Antonio and Vincenzo—the Pallaches worked together as a team, strategically distancing themselves from one another, even offering religious conversion as 'part of a family strategy that also involved the deliberate diversification of its members on all sides of religious and political frontiers', as Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard Wiegers have observed.⁷³ The parallels between the Pallaches and the Cigalas, especially between Samuel Pallache and Carlo, are striking. Both men undertook high-risk ventures to play off one party against the other and achieve a significant measure of social, political, and economic advancement. In both cases, the pursuit of their goals required a great deal of travel, although Pallache's service for the Moroccan sultan Muley Zaydan in the Netherlands certainly took him across greater distances than Carlo's jockeying between the Sublime Porte and Madrid. There is one crucial difference, however: by virtue of being Jews, the Pallaches were in a much more precarious position than the Cigalas who were of proven Genoese noble stock and who, in Carlo's days, had already established themselves firmly in Spanish service as well as the Catholic Church. Even with a Christian-convert mother and a renegade brother, Carlo could hardly be regarded as liminal in the Christian-European social landscape. After all, he was the son of a celebrated Catholic naval officer-*cum*-corsair and the nephew of a cardinal.⁷⁴ The choice to consciously adopt 'Jewish' strategies and imitate the example of a prominent Jew is therefore tremendously remarkable.

The example of the Pallaches is also instructive in that such a set of interconnections between family members and friends as well as patronage relationships cannot be regarded merely as a predominantly Mediterranean system.⁷⁵ To be sure, places along the Mediterranean littoral played an important role in the lives of Samuel Pallache and his relatives. More importantly, however, they were actors in a world which reached far beyond the Mediterranean to include not only countries directly bordering it—such as Morocco, Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, and the Ottoman Empire—but also, centrally, the Netherlands and England. The cases of Neuser and Penckner, too, support the conclusion that such trans-imperial connections were part of a geographically more wide-ranging phenomenon. Moreover, the biography of Elias of Babylon, a Chaldean Christian who lived in the New World for almost a decade in the late seventeenth century and subsequently wrote about his travels in Arabic, hints at how such networks between migrants and their

⁷³ García-Arenal and Wiegers, *Man of Three Worlds*, 61–3, quotation from p. 62.

⁷⁴ Benzoni, 'Cicala, Visconte', 341.

⁷⁵ Palmira Brummett, 'Placing the Ottomans in the Mediterranean World: The Question of Notables and Households', *Osmanlı Araştırmaları/Journal of Ottoman Studies*, 36 (2010), 75–94.

friends and families in their former homes increasingly, if very gradually, began to connect even greater geographical distances, as this 'Old World' extended its contacts with other parts of the globe.⁷⁶

That we are much better informed about Italians' contacts with their renegade relatives may owe much to the extent of research undertaken in the Venetian archives. Besides, Adam Neuser's son, for instance, did attempt to join his father in Istanbul, but was apprehended by Imperial officials on his way and imprisoned in Vienna.⁷⁷ Perhaps his fate is an indicator that travelling from the Habsburg domains to Ottoman territory for reasons other than diplomacy, commerce, and pilgrimage was more difficult than travelling from the Italian ports in the Mediterranean. On the other hand, as far as the Imperial authorities were concerned, Neuser had a criminal past and his son therefore their attention, which made his attempt at joining his father abroad easier to detect than those of other inhabitants of the Holy Roman Empire.

The scarcity of material on the subject of continued contacts between renegades and their family members in Christian Europe in the Viennese archives compared to those of Venice also owes to the fact that, while there was a relatively large number of Venetian and other Italian renegades in high-ranking offices in the Ottoman elite in this period, with the exception of the vizier Zal Mahmud Paşa who died in 1577, no former subject of the Austrian Habsburgs or the Holy Roman Emperor seems to have attained a comparable standing at the time. Family relationships involving lower-ranking officials, therefore, may simply have passed under the radar of the Imperial ambassadors and their staff in Istanbul, even as Gerlach did pick up on the story of Martin Gruo and his brother. Similarly, although charged with the administration of the Habsburg–Ottoman frontier, the Inner Austrian Aulic War Council's surviving records show that it was concerned more with issues of defence and violations of the border by Ottoman troops than with the movements of merchants and private individuals, unless perhaps they were suspected of being Ottoman spies.⁷⁸ If indeed there is any substantial amount of relevant documentation on this phenomenon in any of the archives in what used

⁷⁶ John-Paul A. Ghobrial, 'Stories Never Told: The First Arabic History of the World', *Osmanlı Araştırmaları/Journal of Ottoman Studies*, 40 (2012), 259–82; Ghobrial, 'The Secret Life of Elias of Babylon and the Uses of Global Microhistory', *Past and Present*, 222 (2014), 51–93. For the wider implications of such networks, especially in the context of trade, see also Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009); Sebouh David Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean: The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from Julfa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

⁷⁷ Raoul Motika, 'Adam Neuser: Ein Heidelberger Theologe im Osmanischen Reich', in Sabine Prätör and Christoph K. Neumann (eds), *Frauen, Bilder und Gelehrte: Studien zu Gesellschaft und Künsten im Osmanischen Reich; Festschrift Hans Georg Majer*, 2 vols (Istanbul: Simurg, 2002), ii.536; Mulsow, 'Fluchträume', 55–6. The latter also discusses the correspondence between Neuser and his son.

⁷⁸ An investigation of Hungarian merchants because of fears that they might be spies for the Ottomans occupied the Aulic War Council and the civic authorities in Vienna during the summer and autumn of 1575. See KA, HKR, box 5, files 1575/7/339 Registratur and 1575/10/127 Registratur.

to be the Austrian-Habsburg empire, it is most likely to be found in local collections and even there perhaps mostly in private papers.

The experiences of the Michiels and the Cigalas need to be seen not only in the context of cross-border contacts between Christian-European renegades and their families and acquaintances in Christendom. Again, the wider context of the Ottoman elite is instructive. Although the recruitment of soldiers and administrators through the *devşirme* was in theory designed to effect the severance of local and familial ties in order to ensure the recruits' utter dependence on and loyalty to the sultan, it clearly failed to achieve that aim. This had wider consequences than the existence of alliances and patronage networks among members of the military-administrative elite based on shared regional origins (*cins*), discussed in Chapter 4. Sokollu Mehmed Paşa, for instance, famously appointed members of his family to various important positions across the Empire. Such patronage was not restricted to those of his relatives who had converted to Islam. When the patriarchate of Peć was re-established in 1577, the first appointee was probably either one of Sokollu's nephews, or possibly even one of his brothers. If this is correct, the office remained in the hands of the family for three decades, passing to two further descendants in unbroken succession. According to Gerlach, this long-serving grand vizier had already appointed the son of one of his brothers to an archbishopric in Rumelia in 1574. Moreover, a fair number of *vakıfs* founded by Sokollu over the course of his career were situated in Bosnia. These included numerous buildings such as caravanserais, bath houses, and bridges. Similar acts of material patronage of certain localities are known from the lives of other high-ranking officials, notably Koca Sinan Paşa.⁷⁹ Cigalazade, Gazanfer, Fatima, and other renegades, therefore, simply conformed to well-established patterns among members of the Ottoman elite in a logical extension which owed to the coincidence of their birth outside the sultan's domains.

(UN)LIKELY ALLIES

The accident of renegades' birth and upbringing in Christian Europe was in many ways both liability and asset to Christian-European states. Some of the dangers inherent in losing skilled and knowledgeable individuals to the Ottoman Empire are outlined in Chapter 4. But in general, the presence of a significant number of Christian-European converts in key positions within the Ottoman state apparatus also presented tantalizing opportunities. As Noel Malcolm has put it, 'there was always the possibility that a Western diplomat could play on their residual affection

⁷⁹ Gilles Veinstein, 'Sokollu Mehmed Paşa', in *EP*, vol. ix (1997), pp. 706–11; Gerlach, *Tagebuch*, 64, 329–30; Schwarz and Kurio, *Die Stiftungen Koğa Sinân Paşchas*; Suraiya N. Faroqhi, *Kultur und Alltag im Osmanischen Reich: Vom Mittelalter bis zum Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: Beck, 1995), 156, 260; Daniel Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe* (New Approaches to European History, 24; Cambridge: CUP, 2002), 68; Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: CUP, 2008), 124.

for their homeland'.⁸⁰ And the historical record reveals no shortage of attempts to do exactly that. In fact, the extent to which Christian-European diplomats, in particular, relied on renegades betrays the great ambivalence with which Christian-European states approached those whom they officially condemned as apostates and traitors. This ambivalence opened up room for manoeuvre—for Christian-European political actors as well as renegades themselves—which defied and undermined the expectations inherent in an understanding of religious conversion as a declaration of political loyalty and a turning against former co-religionists and co-nationals.

Most immediately, of course, renegades were relevant to Christian-European diplomats as translators and interpreters. In these positions they were not merely interlocutors and representatives of Ottoman interests, but also represented Christian-European interests to Ottoman officials. Dragomans of the Porte like Mahmud, Murad, and Ali Beys introduced in Chapter 4 also found themselves on the payroll of the Habsburg ambassadors. Ali Bey, for example, is listed as the Imperial embassy's main dragoman (*Hausdragoman*) in accounts from 1581 to 1583. Moreover, during an illness in 1582, the role was temporarily covered by another renegade, Hürrem Bey, who also worked for the Spanish negotiator Giovanni Marigliani and was central in the secret negotiations for a truce between Philip II and the Sublime Porte.⁸¹ While Murad Bey's services as an interpreter were no longer needed by the Imperial embassy at this time, perhaps because he was already considered too old, Friedrich Preiner employed the Hungarian-born convert to tutor Augerio Zeffi, the son of the embassy's dragoman Domenico Zeffi and a member of the Italian-speaking community of Galata, as part of his training as a dragoman. Preiner and his predecessor Joachim von Sinzendorff had invested in the younger Zeffi's professional development since at least 1580, arranging and paying for tuition, for instance by an Ottoman *kadı* (judge), as well as providing regular maintenance payments.⁸² Such simultaneous employments for the Ottoman state as well as several Christian-European diplomats did not result in a conflict of loyalties in principle. On the contrary, undertaking commissions to translate for various parties was entirely compatible with being a dragoman of the Porte. The linguistic services provided by these individuals were desired by both parties and

⁸⁰ Noel Malcolm, *Agents of Empire: Knights, Corsairs, Jesuits and Spies in the Sixteenth-Century Mediterranean World* (London: Lane, 2015), 225.

⁸¹ Tobias P. Graf (ed.), *Der Preis der Diplomatie: Die Abrechnungen der kaiserlichen Gesandten an der Hohen Pforte, 1580–1583* (Heidelberg: heiBOOKS, 2016), doc. 4, no. 1, doi: 10.11588/heibooks.70.60; doc. 6, no. 21; doc. 8, no. 1; doc. 9, nos. 6, 16, and 49. On Ali, see Nedim Zahirović, 'Two Habsburg Sources of Information at the Sublime Porte in the Second Half of the 16th Century', in Baramova et al. (eds), *Power and Influence*, 417–23; Müller, *Franken im Osten*, 264; Müller, *Prosopographie*, ix.216–18. On Hürrem Bey, Gürkan, 'Mediating Boundaries', 112–14; Gürkan, 'Touting for Patrons', 147–8; Gürkan, 'Espionage', 122–3, 291–312; 449; Müller, *Franken im Osten*, 270–1; Müller, *Prosopographie*, ii.124–5.

⁸² Graf, *Preis der Diplomatie*, doc. 1, nos. 94, 99; doc. 6, nos. 31–2; doc. 7, nos. 14, 30, 44, 58; doc. 9, nos. 53–4; doc. 10, no. 3; Müller, *Prosopographie*, x.310–11. According to Josef Matuz, 'Die Pfortendolmetscher zur Herrschaftszeit Süleymäns des Prächtigen', *Südost-Forschungen*, 34 (1975), 54. Murad would have been in his early to mid-seventies at this time.

perhaps the practice even served to create an atmosphere of parity—if not of trust, then at least of mistrust which, in such circumstances, is the second-best thing.

While interpreters were, of course, indispensable to diplomatic negotiations, the presence of compatriots and former subjects in Ottoman officialdom, even at the highest levels, presented Christian-European states with far more attractive prospects of directly influencing policy making in the Ottoman Empire. For the last two decades of the sixteenth century, Venice was theoretically in an unrivalled position to interfere directly in Ottoman politics because of Gazanfer Ağa and his family. As Lorenzo Bernardo pointed out in 1590, the eunuch was not only 'the most powerful [figure] at this Porte after the sultana [Mehmed III's mother Safiye] . . . [he also] would be able to bring greater benefit than anybody else because he is always in the Grand Signor's presence [and therefore] witnesses and knows every matter which is handled [at the Porte]'. His sister, moreover, became a valued source of intelligence from the harem. Bailo Girolamo Cappello, for example, praised her 'access to the palace and the queen, where she does not fail to observe that which touches upon Your Serenity's interests' and 'does not fail to serve and provide information wherever she can'.⁸³

Although Venetian *baili* at times had high hopes of Gazanfer's ability to influence matters in their favour, these pale in contrast to a plan of near-Millennarian dimensions concerning Cigalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa developed in the 1590s and early 1600s. Already in 1593, when the latter's brother Carlo had travelled to the Ottoman capital, rumour had it that the purpose of this voyage was 'the business of the Spanish truce' with the Sublime Porte.⁸⁴ Bailo Matteo Zane considered this a desperate attempt in light of the failure of previous efforts to renew the agreement signed by Giovanni Margliani in 1581 and was convinced that 'the matter . . . [would] come to nothing'.⁸⁵ This rumour testifies to how naturally Christian-European diplomats expected family connections to be put to use to serve a given ruler's interests. This expectation, moreover, was only logical, given how central family relations were to political life and even to foreign policy in early modern Christian Europe, especially at the levels of royalty and nobility.

When Carlo returned to the Ottoman Empire in 1600, he had been given authorization to engage in negotiations on behalf of Christian-European authorities. Their purpose, moreover, was far more subversive than the earlier rumours about his involvement in truce negotiations; for what was at stake this time was Cigalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa's return to Christianity as well as his political and

⁸³ Pedani-Fabris (ed.), *Relazioni inedite*, 346 (first quotation), 418 (remaining quotations). The translations here have been partly adapted from Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 2, 1 and Dursteler, 'Fatima Hatun', 367. The siblings' pro-Venetian activities are discussed in Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 21–4; Dursteler, 'Fatima Hatun', 367–9.

⁸⁴ *CSP Venice*, ix.66, no. 150 (Polo Paruta to Doge and Senate, Rome, 10 Apr. 1593); ix.75–6, no. 172 (Zane to Doge and Senate, Constantinople, 24 May 1593), quotation from these pages; ix.76, no. 174 (Zane to Doge and Senate, Constantinople, 9 June 1593). Compare HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for 1593 May–June, fo. 54^v–v' (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 19 May 1593, enciphered), at fo. 54^v; Ocakaçan, 'Cigalazade', 333; Pappalardo, 'Ambizione', 147–8.

⁸⁵ *CSP Venice*, ix.76, no. 174 (Zane to Doge and Senate, Constantinople, 9 June 1593).

military support against the Ottoman Empire.⁸⁶ In themselves, such negotiations for the defection of high-ranking naval officials and corsairs were an integral part of Spain's foreign policy toolbox. Emrah Safa Gürkan's work in the Archivo General in Simancas has uncovered records of similar attempts to win the allegiance not only of eminent naval commanders like Hayreddin Barbarossa, Uluç Ali, and Uluç Hasan but even individuals much lower in the hierarchy.⁸⁷

The negotiations for Çiğalazade's change of sides, however, were part of a wider scheme which involved Pope Clement VIII, King Philip III of Spain, and Emperor Rudolf II, as well as the mediation of Carlo's Jesuit cousins Antonio and Vincenzo. Initially conceived in the 1590s, the plan had taken sufficient shape by 1603 for Clement to have papal briefs prepared for dispatch to his 'dear son, the noble Scipione Cigala' who, he understood, wanted to 'return to the bosom of the Holy Roman Church'.⁸⁸ The pope welcomed this step and, at the same time, encouraged the *kapudan paşa* to take up arms 'against the tyranny of the Turks', overthrow the Ottoman sultan, and install a Christian dynasty in Constantinople. Clement assured the allegedly repentant renegade that Rudolf II and Philip III had already pledged weapons, ships, men, and funds to support his war of 'liberation' from the 'Turkish yoke'. Indeed, the pope had managed to obtain such concessions from both Habsburg monarchs as a result of the negotiations carried out by Antonio and Vincenzo. Çiğalazade's reward, however, would not simply be reconciliation with the Church. With the exception of Hungary (which was reserved for Rudolf II) and Jerusalem (for Philip III), Clement granted him the possession of, as well as the title to, any territories which he would conquer from the Ottomans as heritable property. In short, Clement VIII, and along with him Philip III and Rudolf II, dreamed of no less than ending the Ottoman presence and establishing a new—crucially, a Roman-Catholic—Byzantium in its place.⁸⁹ However, Clement's letters to Çiğalazade were never dispatched since the admiral was reassigned to the Persian theatre early in 1604.⁹⁰

Indeed, it is far from clear that all parties involved were entirely convinced that the ambitious plan, the details of which are contained in a memorandum from

⁸⁶ Gürkan, 'Espionage', 175; Gino Benzoni, 'Cicala, Scipione', 335–6; Niederkorn, 'Negotium secretum', 425–34.

⁸⁷ Emrah Safa Gürkan, 'My Money or Your Life: The Habsburg Hunt for Uluc Ali', *Studia Historica: Historia Moderna*, 36 (2014), 121–45; Gürkan, 'Espionage', 112–13.

⁸⁸ Ilario Rinieri, 'Clemente VIII e Sinan Bassà Cicala: Secondo documenti inediti', pt 8, *La Civiltà Cattolica*, series 16, 12/1136 (7 Oct. 1897), 155–63 (Clement VIII to Scipione Cicala, Rome, 5 Apr. 1603), quotations from pp. 155 and 163; Pappalardo, 'Ambizione', 150–1. The prospect of Çiğalazade's defection is mentioned in Clement VIII's instructions to his envoy in Spain, Giovanni Francesco Aldobrandini, dated 10 Nov. 1594. The letter is included in Klaus Jaitner (ed.), *Die Hauptinstruktionen Clemens' VIII. für die Nuntien und Legaten an den europäischen Fürstenhöfen, 1592–1605*, 2 vols (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1984), i.278–303, no. 39. Çiğalazade's defection is discussed on pp. 301–3. See also Niederkorn, 'Negotium secretum', 426.

⁸⁹ Rinieri, 'Clemente VIII e Sinan Bassà Cicala', pt 8, pp. 155–63 (Clement VIII to Scipione Cicala), at pp. 160–1, quotations from p. 156. For Antonio and Visconte Cigala's involvement, see also Rinieri, 'Clemente VIII e Sinan Bassà Cicala', pts 3 and pt 7. Compare Benzoni, 'Cicala, Scipione', 334–5. Gürkan, 'Espionage', 175 mentions Carlo Cigala's mission of persuading his brother to return to Christendom but not its wider context.

⁹⁰ Niederkorn, 'Negotium secretum', 434.

1600 preserved in the Spanish archives, would be feasible. There is little doubt that the pope, for his part, had an unwavering belief in the success of this undertaking even on his deathbed. Philipp III and especially Rudolf II seem to have been more reserved, however. Letters and minutes surviving in Simancas make it clear that the king's councillors were highly sceptical. Yet even they concluded in the end that Christendom, and Spain in particular, had nothing to lose by making preparations to hold up their end of the bargain by assembling a fleet of fifty galleys in Messina. After all, should the *kapudan paşa* fail to rebel, the forces could be used for other purposes.⁹¹

That Cigalazade ever seriously contemplated taking the offer is doubtful, though. He may not even have been aware of the negotiations and scheming surrounding his eagerly anticipated defection. Jan Paul Niederkorn has gone so far to suggest that the whole episode was a ruse, floated by Carlo Cigala with his cousins' aid in order to enhance the family's wealth and prestige, in what the historian calls 'a nearly-perfect fraud', since there was little danger that their lies, if such they were, would be exposed. That Carlo at least sought personal gain from his involvement in the attempt to effect his brother's return to Christianity is evident from the Spanish records in which his requests for honours and titles for himself—particularly the admission to the Order of St. James—are explicitly connected to ensuring the success of his mission to the Ottoman Empire.⁹² Perhaps the elevation to the rank of an Imperial count in 1597 was also connected to this enterprise, although it is curious that while the patent refers to Carlo's father, his uncle Cardinal Giambattista Cigala, and his cousin Antonio, it does not mention his brother who, only the previous year, had been so instrumental in inflicting a resounding defeat on Emperor Rudolf II's forces at the Battle of Mezőkeresztes. Perhaps the memory was still too painful and the association therefore best suppressed.⁹³

The hope of a *coup d'état* in Istanbul was of course illusory and stemmed from a gross overestimation of Cigalazade's importance and personal power base. Given his knowledge and experience as well as his fame, his defection would certainly have been a significant victory for Spain and the Vatican, if mainly one of propaganda. But there is little reason to believe that it would have significantly weakened Ottoman power even in the Mediterranean, let alone in Anatolia and the Levant. That the admiral really would have been able to depose the sultan and hold the capital with the aid of Christian allies sounds rather fantastic, to say the least. Of the many schemes to push back the Ottomans supported by the Spanish crown during the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, this was one of the most ambitious and least likely to succeed.⁹⁴

⁹¹ Niederkorn, 'Negotium secretum', 429, 430–3.

⁹² Niederkorn, 'Negotium secretum', 431–2, quotation from p. 434.

⁹³ Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv, Vienna, Adelsakten, Reichsadelsakten, box 65, no. 30, fos. 3^r, 4^r.

⁹⁴ Emrah Safa Gürkan, 'The Efficacy of Ottoman Counter-Intelligence in the 16th Century', *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 65 (2012), 7–9, 32, 35; Gürkan, 'Espionage', 223–7, 270–85, 292; Niederkorn, 'Negotium secretum', 429–33.

What is of particular interest, however, is the extent to which this episode played on Cigalazade's family connections. Alongside his elder brother, Carlo was not the only Cigala to play a significant role. The first of the pope's letters to the *kapudan paşa* consequently begins with an exposition of how the renegade had entered the Ottoman Empire and converted to Islam, as related to him by 'our dear sons, the noble Count Carlo Cigala, your natural brother, and Antonio and Vincenzo, also of the Cigala family, presbyters of the Society of Jesus, your cousins'. Moreover, not only did the pope not fail to mention that it was these three relatives who 'pleaded with us in your name', he also emphasized that the two Jesuit cousins were central in his negotiations with the Spanish and Austrian Habsburgs.⁹⁵ The only central family member, in fact, whom Clement curiously did not invoke in the letters to Cigalazade is his mother Lucrezia. Nevertheless, in a letter addressed to her in November 1598, shortly after her reunion with the Ottoman admiral off the coast of Sicily, the pope had expressed his hope 'that [the *kapudan paşa*] may not only return to you, his mother in the flesh, but also his spiritual mother, the Holy Catholic Church'.⁹⁶ Even so, the intention clearly was to sway Cigalazade by appealing to his love for his family which he had demonstrated by his support for his brother Carlo as well as his visit to his mother and other family members in 1598.

Beyond his involvement—whether actual or desired—in the scheme hatched by Clement VIII, Cigalazade's biography indicates that the strategy of harnessing local and familial ties to promote political projects was not unique to secular and ecclesiastical rulers, but was equally employed by groups who challenged their authority. This was the case, for example, during the Calabrian revolt of 1599 led, among others, by Tommaso Campanella. Earlier that year, Maurizio de' Rinaldis, a Calabrian landowner and another one of the revolt's leaders, had rowed out to sea to make contact with an Ottoman galley and request military assistance against the Spanish authorities on the understanding that the enemies of the rebels' enemies' would be their friends. Cigalazade seized on this opportunity, agreeing to send thirty ships and 3,000 soldiers along with artillery. It seems that the negotiations by which this agreement was reached were conducted through a number of renegades who had been born in Calabria. The alliance, however, was eventually abortive, even though the Ottoman fleet appeared at the appointed time. By then, Campanella and his associates had already been taken into custody.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Rinieri, 'Clemente VIII e Sinan Bassà Cicala', pt 8, pp. 155–63 (Clement VIII to Scipione Cicala), at pp. 156–7, quotations from pp. 155 and 156. Please note that, while my translation of the first passage is faithful, the original grammatically forms the subject of a sentence in the active voice rather than the Latin equivalent of the English agent in a passive sentence. On Antonio and Vincenzo Cigala, see also Jaitner, *Hauptinstruktionen*, 302 n. 24.

⁹⁶ Rinieri, 'Clemente VIII e Sinan Bassà Cicala', pt 3, pp. 279–80 (Clement VIII to Lucrezia Cicala, Rome, 28 Nov. 1598), at p. 280.

⁹⁷ Noel Malcolm, 'The Crescent and the City of the Sun: Islam and the Renaissance Utopia of Tommaso Campanella', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 125 (2004), 45; Benzoni, 'Cicala, Scipione', 331–2.

RENEGADES AND AUSTRIAN-HABSBURG
INTELLIGENCE

As Fatima/Beatrice's relationship with the Venetian *baili* indicates, renegades were frequently considered valued sources of information which otherwise was difficult to obtain or required corroboration. Their status as 'insiders' of Ottoman elite society and the institutions of government placed them in a position to obtain privileged information and provide intelligence to Christian-European states, usually, though of course not in all cases, through the resident ambassadors in Istanbul.⁹⁸ It is also in this context that the Viennese archives yield substantial evidence of the continued importance of the trans-imperial ties of renegades of Central European backgrounds.

Judging from my sample, intelligence was a prominent field of activity for New Muslims from outside the sultan's domains. Out of a total of 137 individuals, no fewer than twenty-six (19 per cent) were involved in intelligence in one way or another, mostly as spies and informants. As Table 5.1 shows, when set into perspective within the subgroup of seventy-five individuals in the sample whose fields of professional activity following their conversions to Islam are documented in the sources, the proportion rises significantly to 34.7 per cent. These renegades provided intelligence to all relevant parties in this period—including the Ottomans—and, what is more, many worked for more than one side at the same time, a practice which found parallels in the ways in which Jewish information brokers such as Joseph Nasi and David Passi seemed to play off one side against the other.⁹⁹

To be sure, not all of these converts worked as actual spies who took upon them great risks in an attempt to uncover state secrets, but even reports of rumours and the relaying of information freely available in these agents' places of operations were of significant value to their employers. In light of a certain obsession with the secret aspects of intelligence activity—not only the secrecy of that activity itself but also its alleged focus on discovering the secrets of others—it is important to bear in mind that early modern technologies of communication put severe limits on the geographic scope of circulating knowledge. Under such conditions, much greater efforts had to be expended on collecting what in the jargon of intelligence studies is referred to as open-source intelligence.¹⁰⁰ In such conditions, as Noel Malcolm has

⁹⁸ Malcolm, *Agents of Empire*, 223–5; Gürkan, 'Espionage', pp. 132–5, 229–31, and ch. 5.

⁹⁹ Compare, for example, Gürkan, 'Touting for Patrons'; María José Rodríguez-Salgado, 'Eating Bread Together: Hapsburg Diplomacy and Intelligence-Gathering in Mid Sixteenth-Century Istanbul', in Sola Castaño and Varriale (eds), *Detrás de las apariencias*, esp. 99; García-Arenal and Wieggers, *Man of Three Worlds*, esp. 129–31.

¹⁰⁰ For a glimpse of this debate about the importance of secrecy in intelligence studies, see Michael Warner, 'Wanted: A Definition of Intelligence; Understanding Our Craft', *Studies in Intelligence*, 46 (2002), 15–23, <<https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol46no3/article02.html>>, accessed 24 Feb. 2016; Warner, 'Intelligence as Risk Shifting', in Peter Gill, Stephen Marrin, and Mark Phythian (eds), *Intelligence Theory: Key Questions and Debates* (Studies in Intelligence; Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), 16–32; Alan Breakspear, 'A New Definition of Intelligence', *Intelligence and National Security*, 28 (2013), 10; Len Scott and Peter Jackson, 'The Study of Intelligence in Theory and Practice', *Intelligence and National Security*, 19 (2004), 148. On the problem of access even to theoretically publicly available information, Jütte,

Table 5.1. Involvement in intelligence of renegades in my sample.

	Individuals	Percentage		
		Persons involved in intelligence	Persons with known fields of professional activity after conversion	Entire sample
For the Ottomans	11	42.3	14.7	8.0
For the Austrian Habsburgs	17	65.4	22.7	12.4
For the Venetians	1	3.8	1.3	0.7
For the Spanish Habsburgs	1	3.8	1.3	0.7
'Double agents'	4	15.4	5.3	2.9
Total number of unique individuals	26	100.0	34.7	19.0

Note: The totals given in the last row are lower than the sums of the figures in the respective columns since several individuals provided intelligence-related services to multiple parties.

remarked, 'it is surprisingly difficult . . . to determine at what point an intelligence-gatherer turns into a spy'. Seen in this light, the plurality of clients of such individuals, in most instances, is directly comparable to that of writers of *avvisi*, handwritten newsletters.¹⁰¹

How valuable such agents were is indicated by the records of the Imperial embassy at Istanbul. An almost unbroken series of expenditure accounts from March 1580 to August 1583 drawn up by Joachim von Sinzendorff and his successor Friedrich Preiner show that just over a quarter of the money spent in this three-and-a-half-year period was paid for intelligence-related services.¹⁰² The twenty-six agents clearly

Zeitalter des Geheimnisses, 28–39; John-Paul A. Ghobrial, *The Whispers of Cities: Information Flows in Istanbul, London, and Paris in the Age of William Trumbull* (Oxford: OUP, 2013), pp. 13–14, ch. 5; Malcolm, *Agents of Empire*, 223; Rodríguez-Salgado, 'Eating Bread Together', 82; Stephen C. Mercado, 'A Venerable Source in a New Era: Sailing the Sea of OSINT in the Information Age', *Studies in Intelligence*, 48 (2004), 45–55, <<https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol48no3/article05.html>>, accessed 22 Feb. 2016; William J. Lahnmann, 'The Need for a New Intelligence Paradigm', *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence*, 23 (2010), 201–25; Jennifer Sims, 'Intelligence to Counter Terror: The Importance of All-Source Fusion', *Intelligence and National Security*, 22 (2007), 40–1.

¹⁰¹ Quotation from Malcolm, *Agents of Empire*, 223. See also Ghobrial, *Whispers of Cities*, 96–100; Zsuzsa Barbarics and Renate Pieper, 'Handwritten Newsletters as a Means of Communication in Early Modern Europe', in Francisco Bethencourt and Florike Egmond (eds), *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe*, iii: *Correspondence and Cultural Exchange in Europe, 1400–1700* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), ch. 2; Mario Infelise, 'From Merchants' Letters to Handwritten Political *avvisi*: Notes on the Origins of Public Information', in Bethencourt and Egmond (eds), *Cultural Exchange*, vol. iii, ch. 1; Johannes Kleinpaul, *Das Nachrichtenwesen der deutschen Fürsten im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der geschriebenen Zeitungen* (Leipzig: Klein, 1930); Rodríguez-Salgado, 'Eating Bread Together', 99.

¹⁰² Total expenditure amounted to 26,905.14 *Talers* of which 7,089.63 *Talers* (26.4 per cent) were spent on intelligence-related services. This calculation is based on Graf, *Preis der Diplomatie*, doc. 1, nos. 3–4, 6, 9, 11, 19, 28–31, 35–9, 44, 47–8, 51–2, 56, 59–60, 73–4, 76, 81, 83–4, 87, 90, 96, 98, 100; doc. 3, nos. 5–6; doc. 4, nos. 1–2, 4, 7–11; doc. 5, nos. 7, 17, 21, 23, 25, 27, 32, 34–7, 41–2; doc. 6, nos. 3–5, 7–8, 10, 12, 19, 21, 25, 33–7; doc. 7, nos. 3–4, 6, 13, 23–4, 28–9, 39, 41, 50, 55,

identifiable on the basis of these registers included seven known converts to Islam of Christian-European origins such as Hürrem Bey, who twice received payments for 'a communication in the Spanish matters'. Tellingly, the corresponding entries were written in cipher, marking them as particularly sensitive.¹⁰³ Together, these seven agents, moreover, received 43.8 per cent of the Imperial ambassadors' intelligence expenditure. While this share admittedly pales in light of the fact that gifts and payments given to the Jewish physician Solomon Ashkenazi in the same period alone amounted to 35.0 per cent of that same expenditure, these seven renegades nevertheless received a significantly disproportionate share, given that they represented just over a quarter of intelligence personnel.

Of particular interest is the amount of overlap between the Austrian-Habsburg network of agents and the network of renegades which had formed around Mahmud Bey and his successor as head of his household Markus Penckner. While Mahmud, of course, does not appear in Sinzendorff and Preiner's expense registers because of his death in 1575, his associates Murad Bey, Ali Bey, Johannes Ferber, and Penckner himself all received payments or gifts in return for intelligence-related services which are clearly distinguishable from the payments made to Murad and Ali for translation work and the former's involvement in training future dragomans.¹⁰⁴ When Penckner had first approached David Ungnad to offer his services in June 1575, he had declared that 'his intention was to serve the [ambassador's] house in place of Mahmud Bey', his former patron.¹⁰⁵ The latter had not only worked as an interpreter for the Imperial ambassador but had also offered intelligence services. This offer seems to have been a subterfuge, though, intended to gain the Emperor's trust and thus facilitate Mahmud's efforts of collecting intelligence for the Porte.¹⁰⁶ The network as such, however, remained relevant to Habsburg intelligence until the outbreak of war with the Ottomans in 1593, even though most of the key members from the earlier decades—Mahmud, Murad, Ali, Neuser, and Penckner—were dead by then. In 1592, Friedrich von Kreckwitz recruited the Austrian-born renegade Aur who had succeeded Penckner

61; doc. 8, nos. 1–2, 4, 7, 9–12; doc. 9, nos. 2–3, 7, 12–16, 20, 26–7, 32, 46, 48–9, 52, 67, 70–1, 74; doc. 10, nos. 1, 5–6, 8–11, 13, 17, 19–20, 26–7. This includes all gifts and payments given to individuals who were mentioned to have performed intelligence-related services at least once unless the entry made a different purpose for the gift or payment explicit. The total expenditure used here corresponds to the sum of all expenses detailed in the accounts transcribed in the volume and summarized on p. xiv, table 1 but excludes the sum of 1,467.42 *Talers* recovered from doc. 8, no. 17 for which no detailed account seems to have survived (compare pp. xiii–xiv and 61 n. 15).

¹⁰³ Graf, *Preis der Diplomatie*, doc. 10, nos. 8 and 26, quotation from no. 8.

¹⁰⁴ Graf, *Preis der Diplomatie*, doc. 6, nos. 3, 19; doc. 9, nos. 32, 74; doc. 10, no. 10.

¹⁰⁵ HHStA, Türkei I, box 31, bundle for 1575 May–June, fos. 64^r–73^v (David Ungnad to Emperor Maximilian II, Constantinople, 6 June 1575), at fo. 69^v.

¹⁰⁶ On Mahmud Bey's work for the Habsburgs, see Ernst D. Petritsch, 'Der habsburgisch-osmanische Friedensvertrag des Jahres 1547', *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs*, 38 (1985), 63; Zahirowić, 'Two Habsburg Sources', 420; Gábor Ágoston, 'Information, Ideology, and Limits of Imperial Policy: Ottoman Grand Strategy in the Context of Ottoman–Habsburg Rivalry', in Virginia Aksan and Daniel Goffman (eds), *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), 86. The HHStA preserves two cipher keys associated with Murad in Staatskanzlei, Interiora, box 16, fos. 211^r–213^v. Petritsch notes that HHStA, Türkei I does not contain even a single letter written in either cipher.

as head of the household. As Kreckwitz informed Archduke Ernst, because of Aur's association with Penckner, he had 'good intelligence from the Transylvanian embassy and can serve us well in this and other matters'. The diplomat therefore advised Archduke Ernst to award him a yearly stipend of 50 *Talers* to begin with, considering it a promising investment:

Because he has initially made good progress, learning not only to speak but also to read and write Turkish, I am hopeful that . . . he can be encouraged to further improve his command of this language so that he can be of even better service to this house [i.e. the embassy] or even to His Majesty should he return to Christendom, which he greatly desires.¹⁰⁷

As a spy handler with an eye for potential and his willingness to invest in the development of his agent, Kreckwitz here appears as no less professional than his twentieth- and twenty-first-century counterparts.

Penckner, however, initially had not been welcomed with great enthusiasm. Rather, Ungnad, who eventually accepted his services, had warned strongly against hiring the Transylvanian:

God shall prevent me from recommending [this man] to Your Majesty. . . . His spirits could not be more wicked and desperate. Because of his evil misdeeds he was chased out of all places in which he formerly practised, but due to his trickery he was readmitted for a while first to one, then another. He cannot be trusted. . . . The Earth should swallow such a wicked man.¹⁰⁸

Ungnad, in fact, had every reason to be suspicious. In the previous months, he had become aware that Penckner had convinced Grand Vizier Sokollu Mehmed Paşa to send him to Christian Europe on a mission of espionage. By March 1575, the initially more limited idea had turned into an elaborate operation intended to penetrate the Spanish court in order 'to gather intelligence on everything' for up to a year. In this scheme, Penckner would pose as a repentant apostate seeking readmission to the Christian fold. To lend greater credibility to his cover story, the would-be spy even sought to obtain letters of reference from Gabrio Serbelloni, a high-ranking officer (and cousin of Pope Pius IV) who had been captured during the Ottoman reconquest of Tunis in 1574 and was now imprisoned in Istanbul.¹⁰⁹ Since this fascinating episode of espionage and counter-espionage is best discussed in detail elsewhere, suffice it here to say that, not least thanks to David Ungnad's efforts and his sources, Penckner's mission had been compromised even before he left the Ottoman capital on 16 March. When the Transylvanian-born renegade

¹⁰⁷ KA, IÖHKR, Croatica, Akten, box 4, file 1592/10/119, fos. 115^r–152^v (Kreckwitz to Archduke Ernst, Constantinople, 13 Sept. 1592, with a postscript of 14 Sept.), at fos. 150^v–151^r.

¹⁰⁸ HHStA, Türkei I, box 31, bundle for 1575 May–June, fos. 64^r–73^v (Ungnad to Maximilian II, Constantinople, 6 June 1575), at fo. 69^v.

¹⁰⁹ HHStA, Türkei I, box 31, bundle for 1575 Mar., fos. 21^r–22^v (Ungnad to Maximilian II, Constantinople, 10 Mar. 1575), at fo. 21^r. On Serbelloni, see Malcolm, *Agents of Empire*, 156, 189–91, 207, 216.

returned less than six weeks later, he complained to Sokollu 'that everywhere his cover had been blown and he had been betrayed', correctly blaming the Christian-European embassies for having relayed news of his undertaking.¹¹⁰

Although Ungnad, unsurprisingly, gives no indications of who provided him with information about Penckner and his machinations, we know that Adam Neuser was one of the ambassador's principal sources. And Neuser was very close to the German-Transylvanian indeed. It was most probably from the former Heidelberg preacher himself that the ambassador learned of 'a special alphabet', a substitution cipher, for use in correspondence between the undercover agent and Neuser, who was to 'inform [Sokollu] Mehmed Paşa about what [Penckner] was planning and where he was'.¹¹¹ Since the use of ciphers among the Ottomans was extremely rare, the idea was most probably conceived by the two renegades. It is quite likely that this 'special alphabet' was a simple Caesarean cipher, an encryption method which Neuser also used to protect some of his personal notes which found their way to the research library in Gotha.¹¹²

In Ungnad's handling of the affair, the information he must have received from Neuser was key. How much value he placed in the man's contribution to intelligence and his potential for continuing to do so is evident from a detailed appraisal written in May 1575 from which it is worth quoting extensively:

I am of the opinion that Your Majesty, doubtlessly on the advice of [my predecessor] Karl Rym, has acted very wisely in ceasing to request from [Sokollu] Mehmed Paşa that Neuser be handed over for punishment [as demanded by his former lord, the Elector Palatine Friedrich III]. Such requests would not only have been fruitless but would have damaged Your Majesty's interests while causing the accused much advantage, enhancing his reputation and thus winning him greater support from Mehmed Paşa. A continuation of these requests might have prompted him to finally break with the embassy and turn his life towards causing Your Majesty much trouble and harm. As it is, Neuser has risked his life for us solely in the hope that Your Majesty will pardon him. He persists in requesting my help in this matter... I have asked him to remain patient and have exhorted him to continue his loyal service. It is certain that he will never give up his hope of returning to Christendom although it would be much better that he remain here and serve the house as he has hitherto done. But since he is so adamant about being excused for his past guilt and receiving Your Majesty's mercy, I must not destroy all his hopes. I take great care to keep whatever assurances I give to him so vague and non-committal that he cannot hold me to them and that they certainly do not prejudice Your Majesty in any way. Nonetheless, I most humbly ask

¹¹⁰ HHStA, Türkei I, box 31, bundle for 1575 Apr., fos. 236^r–240^v (Ungnad to Maximilian II, Constantinople, 24 Apr. 1575), at fo. 239^r. On Penckner's departure, see HHStA, Türkei I, box 31, bundle for 1575 Mar., fos. 38^r–39^v (Ungnad to Maximilian II, Constantinople, 19 Mar. 1575), at fo. 39^v.

¹¹¹ HHStA, Türkei I, box 31, bundle for 1575 Mar., fos. 38^r–39^v (Ungnad to Maximilian II, Constantinople, 19 Mar. 1575), at fo. 39^v. Also compare Archivo General de Simancas, Estado section, leg. 488, item [no. 109] (anonymous report of 17 and 19 Mar. 1575), quoted in Malcolm, *Agents of Empire*, 487 n. 8. I am indebted to Noel Malcolm for informing me about the report kept in Simancas in a personal communication on 30 May 2014.

¹¹² Malcolm, *Agents of Empire*, 230; Mulsow, 'Neusers Brief', 297.

Your Majesty to send him a token of recognition so that he can draw some hope and can thus be preserved in the embassy's service.¹¹³

Ungnad certainly was a cynic—but also intensely pragmatic. Since the information and services provided by Neuser were immensely valuable, it is not surprising that he was unwilling to give up such an excellent spy and sought to retain him by all means. One wonders how big a part Ungnad's mind games played in bringing about the despair, depression, and alcoholism which are said to have dominated the final months of Neuser's life.¹¹⁴ Bearing in mind Ungnad's verdict that Penckner—and by extension other renegades—could not be trusted, it seems paradoxical that men like him, Mahmud, Murad, Neuser, Ferber, and Aur played such an important role in the Austrian Habsburgs' intelligence operations in the Ottoman Empire. Just as converts themselves were ambiguous about their religious beliefs and political loyalties, the Habsburgs loved treachery but hated the traitors.

Neuser's particular value as an ally of the Imperial ambassador is driven home with particular force in an episode related in Stephan Gerlach's diary. In April 1576, the Ottomans intercepted a bundle of David Ungnad's enciphered letters which were handed over to Neuser and 'the Hungarian as well as Becker, Ali, and Oswald' for decryption. After four days of trying, the men allegedly gave up, informing the grand vizier that 'it was impossible to break the cipher. They could only discover that he, the ambassador, would like the state of peace to continue between the two emperors so that he could return [home] soon because he was eager to get married.' In this context, Gerlach triumphantly claimed that despite their combined efforts, the renegades managed to unravel merely seventy characters of the cipher alphabet, elsewhere boasting that Ungnad's cipher table contained 'almost 200' symbols.¹¹⁵ Both numbers are gross exaggerations, however. Like his predecessors and successors, the Imperial ambassador relied on a relatively simple mono-alphabetic substitution cipher in which each letter was replaced by a corresponding symbol. Even if one includes, as Gerlach suggested, the set of meaningless symbols intended to obfuscate the text as well as code symbols and code words which were invariably written in the clear (e.g. *Narcissus* for the Holy Roman Emperor, *Epicurus* for Sultan Selim II), the cipher table for Ungnad's use preserved in Vienna contains no more than 64 distinct signifiers.¹¹⁶ According to Gerlach, the letters in question also contained passages written in lemon juice which remains

¹¹³ HHStA, Türkei I, box 31, bundle for 1575 May–June, fos. 23^r–32^v (Ungnad to Maximilian II, Constantinople, 14 May 1575), at fo. 29^r. Compare Motika, 'Neuser', 536.

¹¹⁴ Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 254; Motika, 'Neuser', 538; Mulsow, 'Neusers Brief', 312; Mulsow, 'Fluchträume', 58; Christopher J. Burchill, *The Heidelberg Antitrinitarians: Johann Sylvan, Adam Neuser, Matthias Vehe, Jacob Suter, Johann Hasler* (Bibliotheca Dissidentium: Répertoire des non-conformistes religieux ses seizième et dix-septième siècles, 11; Baden-Baden: Koerner, 1989), 111, 123–4.

¹¹⁵ Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 174–5, all quotations from p. 175.

¹¹⁶ HHStA, Staatskanzlei, Interiora, box 16, bundle 1, fo. 2^r–v. I am indebted to Ernst Petritsch for drawing my attention to this collection. The codewords used for individuals, in particular, reflect the attitudes of those who devised the code towards the persons thus labelled, sometimes in a humorous way. *Epicurus*, for example, plays on Selim II's well-known fondness for alcohol which, even in Turkish, won him the epithet *Sarhoş*, the Drunkard. On humour in early modern codes and

invisible when dry until the paper is heated over a flame or glowing coals. Apparently, Neuser and his associates failed to detect such elementary steganography. That Ungnad made use of secret inks, especially in 1576, is evident from his correspondence kept at the Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, although he appears to have done so very sparingly before the summer of that year. Even when he did conceal his messages in this way, he enciphered them for added security.¹¹⁷

Alongside Sokollu Mehmed Paşa's repeated attempts to have clauses forbidding the use of ciphers included in the *ahdnames* with Venice, episodes like this one have been regarded as evidence that the Ottomans, on the whole, were not very effective at breaking Christian-European ciphers.¹¹⁸ In this particular instance, however, the attempt was compromised from the beginning since Neuser, who was certainly the person most experienced in cryptology among the four men entrusted with the task of decrypting Ungnad's correspondence, dutifully kept the ambassador appraised of everything that was going on and promised to return the intercepted letters to him. He even managed to persuade 'the Hungarian', who had been eagerly working on breaking the Habsburg cipher 'because he hoped to rise in [Sokollu's] esteem', to give up his efforts, return the documents to the ambassador, and have them exchanged for less compromising material. Neuser also translated what he understood from the cleartext passages of Ungnad's letters in such a way as to dispel any suspicion and give the impression that their contents were completely benign.¹¹⁹ Rather than the result of incompetence, therefore, the Ottomans' inability to read these letters was the result of successful Habsburg penetration.

In spite of Ungnad's initial reservations, Markus Penckner, too, had begun supplying information to the Imperial ambassador primarily on Transylvania and the Transylvanian negotiations with the Porte by December 1575. As a Transylvanian by birth and because of his language skills and his association with various officials of middle rank, he had had frequent opportunity to interact either with Transylvanian legates themselves or at least with other interpreters who did ever since his arrival in Istanbul and was therefore in a good position to obtain such intelligence.¹²⁰ Báthory was evidently very interested in the services of this man, as Ungnad reported in April 1575, shortly after he had received news that the sultan was going to confirm Báthory as voivode of Transylvania: 'The Transylvanian

ciphers, see Dejanirah Cuoto, 'Spying in the Ottoman Empire: Sixteenth-Century Encrypted Correspondence', in Bethencourt and Egmond (eds), *Cultural Exchange*, iii.293–4.

¹¹⁷ Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 175. Pertinent examples of letters partially written in secret ink are HHStA, Türkei I, box 32, bundle for 1576 Jan.–Apr., fos. 147^r–148^v (Ungnad to Maximilian II, Constantinople, 15 Feb. 1576); box 33, bundle for 1576 July, fos. 119^r–123^v (Ungnad to Maximilian II, Constantinople, 25 July with postscripts of 28 and 30 July and 4 Aug.). Compare the short explanation prefacing a cleartext copy of the latter in box 33, bundle for 1576 July, fos. 153^r–157^v, 160^{r–v}, at fo. 153^r. For the telltale signs of early modern secret inks, see Gürkan, 'Espionage', 81–3.

¹¹⁸ Gürkan, 'Espionage', 86–8.

¹¹⁹ Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 175–7, quotations from p. 177; Motika, 'Neuser', 536.

¹²⁰ HHStA, Türkei I, box 32, bundle for 1575 Dec. and s.d., fos. 42^r–43^r ('Bericht von Marc[us] Benckner', Constantinople, [14 Dec. 1575]); fo. 43^{r–v} ('Ein anderer bericht von Marc[us] Benckner [Penckner] von [sic] 15. decembris', Constantinople); bundle for 1576 Jan.–Apr., fos. 82^r–84^v ('Mehemet Beeg sonst Georg Deackh und Achmach Beeg zuvor Marc[us] Penckhner genandt bericht vom 3. Januarij 1576', Constantinople, [30 Jan. 1576]).

[i.e. Báthory] has written a letter of outrageous contents to this same Markus Penckner, of which I have obtained a copy. If he, Penckner, would agree to serve him, the voivode, as a dragoman, he would receive a salary of 200 *Talers*.¹²¹ Whether Penckner took the job is not clear. His written reports to Ungnad from December 1575 suggest that he was still attached to the household of Mahmud Bey although this was no obstacle to working for Báthory's representative in Istanbul, as the employment of other members of this circle by the Imperial embassy makes clear. In any case, Penckner features as the beneficiary of regular gifts and payments in the expenditure registers of the Imperial ambassadors Sinzendorff and Preiner who, on occasion, commended him for his services in the corresponding entries.¹²²

Individuals like Penckner, Neuser, and Aur continued to matter to Habsburg intelligence for more than a century to come, as the case of Ernst Schmid illustrates. Schmid had travelled to Istanbul in the winter of 1699/1700 along with Ambassador Wolfgang von Oettingen-Wallerstein and converted to Islam fairly soon after his arrival in the capital. By 1720, however, his career in Ottoman service had taken a turn for the worse. Consequently, he approached the Habsburg ambassadors, in the hope of an additional income and, ultimately, the chance of returning to his native Saxony.¹²³ In his hopes, Schmid closely resembles Neuser and Aur who likewise desired to ingratiate themselves with the Holy Roman Emperor in order to be allowed to return home. In Neuser's case there is clear evidence that this desire was genuine and not just a story told to dupe Ungnad, especially since his wife and son had remained behind when he had fled Heidelberg. Although the younger Neuser was apprehended by the authorities in Vienna and imprisoned there when he tried to join his father, he was eventually released, permitted to attend university, and even granted a scholarship by the Holy Roman Emperor as a sign of recognition of his father's service, but perhaps also as a surety for the latter's continued loyalty and commitment.¹²⁴ Of course, the prospect of a pardon and permission to return home provided powerful incentives for those who desired them, a fact of which men like Ungnad, Kreckwitz, and their early eighteenth-century successors were well aware and which they had no scruples to exploit.

Although there is no indication that Penckner ever expressed a serious wish to leave the Ottoman Empire, there are certain parallels between his behaviour and that of Schmid more than one and a half centuries later. Ungnad's reports suggest that, like Schmid's career, Penckner's also was set back in the wake of his failed Spanish adventure, making it increasingly attractive for him to participate in the economy of political secrets to the advantage of Christian-European rulers. After

¹²¹ HHStA, Türkei I, box 31, bundle for 1575 Apr., fos. 200^r–204^v (Ungnad to Maximilian II, Constantinople, 14 Apr. 1575), at fo. 202^v. On the unofficial news of Báthory's appointment, see fo. 202^r.

¹²² HHStA, Türkei I, box 32, bundle for 1575 Dec. and s.d., fo. 42^r–43^r ('Bericht von Marc[us] Benckner', Constantinople, [14 Dec. 1575]); fo. 43^r–^v ('Ein anderer bericht von Marc[us] Benckner [Penckner] von [sic] 15. decembris'); Graf, *Preis der Diplomatie*, doc. 1, nos. 6, 47, 59, 73; doc. 5, nos. 27, 32, 35–6; doc. 6, no. 10; doc. 7, no. 61; doc. 8, no. 4; doc. 9, nos. 12–13, 52; doc. 10, nos. 1, 6, 10.

¹²³ Reindl-Kiel, 'Ende einer Kavaliersreise', 106–87.

¹²⁴ Motika, 'Neuser', 536; Mulsow, 'Fluchträume', 55–7; Gerlach, *Tage-Buch*, 322.

all, and this goes for Neuser as well, we cannot be entirely sure whether these ‘agents’ had really been ‘turned’ to remain loyal to one side rather than the other. Most historians, in fact, agree that the former Heidelberg preacher was a double agent, while María Rodríguez-Salgado has recently questioned whether such promiscuous informants in fact ‘sold their *loyalty* to anyone’ as opposed to having sold specific pieces of information.¹²⁵ Nedim Zahirowić may, of course, be correct in reading the continued services of renegades as a sign of their lingering attachment to the communities they had been part of prior to conversion. On the other hand, both Neuser’s and Penckner’s behaviour, for example, can also be regarded as entrepreneurial, as Emrah Safa Gürkan has suggested in the case of men working for Spanish-Habsburg intelligence. Of course, commercial interests need not have been the most important concern for engaging in the economy of secrecy, even though financial considerations may very well have played a considerable part in Penckner’s intelligence activity. The quest for less material benefits and rewards in return for their services, such as permission to return home, were equally viable motives for entrepreneurship in this context.¹²⁶

CONCLUSION

Individuals, families, and states strategically employed trans-imperial connections in order to claim or mobilize political loyalty as well as expertise, which, in theory at least, might question those very loyalties. Such ties, of course, were double-edged swords. Henry Lello, for example, noted that the meeting between Cigalazade, his mother, and other relatives in 1598

maketh these doubte he will turne christian: The [*valide sultan* Safiye (Mehmed III’s mother)] beinge glad to have found such a hole in his coate, who seeketh by all meanes to depose him, and is of hir greatye hatted, w[hi]ch no doubtt will in tyme gett him out [of office], for she ruleth and comandeth all now as pleaseth hir.¹²⁷

What really made this episode potential ammunition in factional struggles, however, was less the danger of the *kapudan paşa*’s reconversion, as the fact that he and his family went separate ways after their encounter. Had he indeed ‘carried them away’, as rumour in Istanbul had it at the end of October 1598, not only would such suspicions have been dispelled quickly, returning his formerly Muslim mother to the fold and winning his Christian-born relatives for Islam would have been

¹²⁵ Burchill, *Heidelberg Antitrinitarians*, 111; Motika, ‘Neuser’, 536; Mulsow, ‘Neusers Brief’, 307; Rodríguez-Salgado, ‘Eating Bread Together’, 99.

¹²⁶ Zahirowić, ‘Two Habsburg Sources’, 423. The entrepreneurial character of espionage is discussed by Gürkan, ‘Espionage’, ch. 3, esp. pp. 183–6. The term *economy of secrecy* is borrowed from Daniel Jütte, ‘Jews and the Early Modern Quest for Clandestine Knowledge’, *Isis*, 103 (2012), 668–86.

¹²⁷ TNA, SP 97/3, fos. 263^v–264^v (Lello to Cecil, Constantinople, 4/14 Nov. 1598), at fo. 264^r. The first addition in square brackets is my reconstruction of a phrase in cipher.

interpreted as proof of his loyalty, to God as much as to the sultan.¹²⁸ Having said this, there is no evidence that Safiye's attempts to instrumentalize this meeting for her own ends were effective although knowledge of the episode may have fed into allegations that the *kapudan paşa* was an infidel and a spy during the unrest at the arsenal in 1602.¹²⁹ As mentioned in Chapter 4, Çiğalazade retained his office without interruption until his military leadership was needed once more in the newly erupted war with Safavid Iran in 1604.

In some instances, at least, family members in Christendom represented a resource to be deployed in Ottoman elite politics. The prestige of convincing a Christian family member of the truth of Islam was only one potential benefit; and it was one whose effects were in all probability rather fleeting.¹³⁰ We can safely assume that, however much prestige Çiğalazade might have derived from his nephew's conversion, as a factor in shaping his career in the sultan's service it was certainly marginal compared to his family and patronage ties within the Ottoman Empire as well as his training in the palace and his impressive record of service. More important was that, once converted and established in the sultan's service, family members were potentially loyal supporters in the rivalries for office, power, prestige, and wealth between various households and factions. In this sense, attempts to persuade family members to migrate to the Ottoman Empire should be seen in the context of recruitment into grandee households. Moreover, as a practice of recruitment and patronage, it was in keeping with models of nepotism practised widely throughout Christian Europe at the time.¹³¹

How effective such recruitment actually was is unfortunately nearly impossible to establish on the basis of the available evidence. To the best of my knowledge, there is only very scant information about Çiğalazade's nephew. The biography of Gazanfer Ağa's nephew Mehmed/Giacomo would suggest that his uncle would not have profited much from his placements in Ottoman state service. Bailo Cappello, at least, claimed that 'this young man is unable to fulfil the *kapı ağası*'s expectations because he is proving himself to be of obtuse intelligence'.¹³² In any case, Gazanfer's execution in 1603 and the resulting disempowerment of the faction led by Safiye and himself removed a powerful source of patronage for Mehmed's future career, quite possibly choking it in its early stages. When he left Topkapı Palace in the wake of his uncle's death, he probably had not even formally completed his training there, although in light of Capello's assessment of his intellect it is doubtful whether he would even have been permitted to complete the full course.¹³³ Gazanfer's sister Fatima, on the other hand, formed a crucial

¹²⁸ TNA, SP 97/3, fos. 259^v–260^v (Lello to Cecil, Constantinople, 21/31 Oct. 1598), at fo. 260^r.

¹²⁹ Ocakaçan, 'Çiğalazade', 336–7. ¹³⁰ Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 11.

¹³¹ See, for example, Wolfgang Reinhard, *Paul V. Borghese (1605–1621): Mikropolitische Papstgeschichte* (Päpste und Papsttum, 37; Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 2009), esp. 57–8, 83–4.

¹³² Pedani-Fabris (ed.), *Relazioni inedite*, 418. Parts of this passage have also been translated in Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 28.

¹³³ Dursteler, *Renegade Women*, 28; Dursteler, 'Fatima Hatun', 372; Barnette Miller, *The Palace School of Muhammad the Conqueror* (Harvard Historical Monographs, 17; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1941), 160–1.

element in Gazanfer's system of patronage and alliances, cementing the ties with his client Ali Ağa and making her a key piece in household politics, perhaps even a player in her own right.

The strategies employed by Christian-European converts to Islam and their relatives closely resemble those employed by Iberian Jewish families as exemplified by the Pallaches. This is particularly true of Carlo Cigala's vacillation between the Austrian and Spanish Habsburgs on the one hand and the Ottoman sultan on the other. As we saw above, Carlo explicitly modelled his goals and strategies on the example of Joseph Nasi. Further research will hopefully illuminate to what extent these various groups could tap into similar networks to provide the infrastructure without which correspondence and mutual visits were impossible. Such networks may even have enabled those who voluntarily moved to the Ottoman Empire in order to embrace Islam to realize their plans. Although there is currently no evidence of this, it is tempting to speculate that the Spanish officer Don Francisco Torellas had been able to obtain help from Iberian Jews and Moriscos in clandestinely transferring his personal belongings to the Ottoman Empire. Experienced individuals from both groups frequently cooperated in helping each other in this way in the context of their respective expulsions from Spain and may well have agreed to help defectors.¹³⁴

In light of the dismissive rhetorical *topoi* of renegades as traitors of Christianity as well as Christendom in general and of their former rulers in particular, the extent to which Christian-European states made use of those of their subjects who had reneged is striking. Austrian-Habsburg intelligence in Istanbul, for instance, relied on their contribution to such an extent that the Imperial ambassadors allocated a disproportionate amount of their intelligence expenditure to a relatively small group of individuals like Markus Penckner. Such a seemingly ambivalent approach to these men helps put the hegemonic rhetoric of treachery in perspective. As so often, the question of audiences is key in this context. The overwhelmingly negative depiction of Christian-Europeans 'turned Turk' in Christian-European writing, even as it portrayed and at times exaggerated their worldly success, was, of course, aimed at Christian-European audiences. In connection with the representation of 'the Turk' as an Other, the diatribes against renegades served the double purpose of shoring up the sense of 'us' versus 'them' and generally discouraging Christian Europeans from following the examples of well-known individuals like Uluç Ali or John Ward. Although I do not want to overstretch the idea, especially since the bad press was not centrally coordinated, such rhetoric aimed at controlling (and preserving from erosion) the subject base of Christian-European states. Such rhetoric was primarily a defensive measure against what was perceived as both the military might and the allure of the Ottoman Empire.¹³⁵

¹³⁴ HHStA, Türkei I, box 32, bundle for 1576 Jan.–Apr., fos. 225^r–232^v (Ungnad to Maximilian II, Constantinople, 2 Apr. 1576), at fos. 230^v and 231^r; García-Arenal and Wieggers, *Man of Three Worlds*, 53–4.

¹³⁵ Claire Norton, 'Lust, Greed, Torture, and Identity: Narrations of Conversion and the Creation of the Early Modern Renegade', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 29 (2009), 261; Nancy Bisaha, *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks*

The pragmatic approach towards Ottomans of Christian-European origins also reflects the expectation of Christian-European actors that shared origins—nation in its early modern sense—as well as family ties formed bonds which were capable of mobilizing support. That such expectations were not unreasonable in the experience of the time is illustrated by the importance of such shared origins as well as nepotism in patronage networks, both in Christian Europe and the Ottoman Empire. In fact, influential European thinkers like Thomas Aquinas—even the Bible—explicitly highlighted the individual's obligation of supporting family members as well as compatriots as a commandment of Christian charity.¹³⁶ In this sense, perhaps, Christian-European states rarely fully gave up on former subjects who had embraced Islam and at times even treated them with a measure of goodwill. This stance became easier, of course, as these men and women rose to positions of power and prominence in the sultan's service by which they became both more dangerous as enemies and more valuable as allies and partners. It is this combination which ultimately led Venice, for example, to treat Gazanfer Aga and his sister not as renegades, but as 'high-ranking persons belonging to another religion'.¹³⁷

The importance of Christian-European converts to Islam in the Ottoman elite as coveted allies of Christian-European states should not be exaggerated, however. As in so many other respects discussed in this book, in this one, too, these former Christians constituted only one group among many. Invoking shared religious and regional origins was one of several tools which Christian-European states and their representatives employed to obtain intelligence and influence policy making as well as events in the Ottoman Empire. In the process, they made use of a variety of groups, including those who had remained Christian or Jewish.¹³⁸ Another widely employed measure were valuable gifts in cash and kind, sometimes intended as bribes but perhaps not always—or at least not in the morally problematic sense attached to them in modern discourses of corruption—in order to secure the goodwill of various key players, regardless of their faiths and origins.¹³⁹ In this

(Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 183; Paula Sutter Fichtner, *Terror and Toleration: The Habsburg Empire Confronts Islam, 1526–1850* (London: Reaktion Books, 2008), 24–5; Felix Konrad, 'From the "Turkish Menace" to Exoticism and Orientalism: Islam as Antithesis of Europe (1453–1914)?', *European History Online* (Mainz: Leibniz Institute of European History, 14 Mar. 2011), pars. 6, 8–10, <<http://www.ieg-ego.eu/konradf-2010-en>>, accessed 18 Feb. 2016; Nabil I. Matar, *Turks, Moors and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 71–2.

¹³⁶ Reinhard, *Paul V. Borghese*, 57–8, 84. Reinhard explicitly refers to 1 Timothy 5:8.

¹³⁷ Pedani, 'Safiyeh's Household', 26.

¹³⁸ For a sense of the range of people of different backgrounds employed the Venetians in their intelligence operations directed against the Ottoman Empire, see Paolo Preto, *I servizi segreti di Venezia* (2nd edn, Milan: il Saggiatore, 2004), 247–56.

¹³⁹ On the importance of gifts in Ottoman society, see Hedda Reindl-Kiel, 'Luxury, Power Strategies, and the Question of Corruption: Gifting in the Ottoman Elite (16th–18th Centuries)', in Yavuz Köse and Tobias Völker (eds), *Şehrâyn* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012), esp. 118–19; Reindl-Kiel, 'East Is East and West Is West, and Sometimes the Twain Did Meet: Diplomatic Gift Exchange in the Ottoman Empire', in Colin Imber, Keiko Kiyotaki, and Rhoads Murphy (eds), *Frontiers of Ottoman Studies*, 2 vols (Library of Ottoman Studies, 5–6; London: I. B. Tauris, 2004), ii.113–23; Michael Talbot, 'British Diplomacy in the Ottoman Empire during the Long Eighteenth Century', PhD thesis, SOAS, University of London, 2013, ch. 4.

context it must be remembered that the roster of intelligence agents employed by Imperial Ambassadors Joachim von Sinzendorff and Friedrich Preiner included not only renegades but also Ottoman Christians and Jews. In fact, the by far best-paid individual in the relevant accounts was the Jewish doctor Solomon Ashkenazi. As Sokollu Mehmed Paşa's physician and trusted adviser, he had privileged access to information as well as a measure of influence. In addition, his position and language skills made him an ideal intermediary for the Venetians as well as the Austrian Habsburgs.¹⁴⁰ Benedetto Bruti, the Albanian-Christian confidant and relative of Koca Sinan Paşa, played a similar role, for example during the diplomatic crisis on the eve of the Long War. In this capacity, he provided not only an informal channel of negotiations during Friedrich von Kreckwitz's house arrest in the Imperial embassy but the diplomat even considered him an ideal choice as head of Austrian-Habsburg intelligence in Istanbul alongside Matthia del Faro in the event of an outbreak of war.¹⁴¹ Nor were the individuals employed by Christian-Europeans in this way necessarily always 'outsiders' who either shared, or had shared, their religious affiliation or hailed from similar geographic or linguistic backgrounds. The mufti of Istanbul (*seyhülislam*) as the highest religious and legal authority in the Ottoman Empire, for instance, was an important contact for the Venetians since his legal opinions (Turkish: *fetva*, Arabic: *fatwā*) could immediately influence policy making by declaring a course of action as either in accordance with, or violation of Islamic law. Although such *fetvas* were not legally binding, they did carry considerable moral weight. The pursuit of what Joshua White has called *fetva* diplomacy was not an exclusively Venetian activity. After the end of the Long War, the Imperial ambassador Adam von Herberstein and his adjunct Johan Rimaj likewise sought to bolster Emperor Rudolf II's demand for the restitution of the fortresses of Gran and Canisa by appealing to Şeyhülislam Hoca-Sadüddinzade Mehmed Efendi, although to no avail.¹⁴² In the course of the events that had led to the outbreak of war, Kreckwitz, too, had made use of a notable member of the *'ilmiye* (religious and legal scholars), Maruf Efendi who left Istanbul in mid-May

¹⁴⁰ Benjamin Arbel, 'Ashkenazi, Solomon', in Norman A. Stillman et al. (eds), *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World*, 5 vols (Leiden: Brill, 2010), i.273; Arbel, *Trading Nations*, ch. 4; Gürkan, 'Mediating Boundaries', 118–19; Gürkan, 'Touting for Patrons', 146–8; Žahirović, 'Two Habsburg Sources', 421–2. For payments made and gifts given to Ashkenazi, see Graf, *Preis der Diplomatie*, doc. 1, no. 19; doc. 3, no. 5; doc. 4, no. 7; doc. 5, no. 41; doc. 7, no. 41; doc. 8, no. 7; doc. 9, no. 2; doc. 10, no. 20.

¹⁴¹ Malcolm, *Agents of Empire*, 383, 395–7; HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for 1593 May–June, fos. 191^r–208^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 14 June 1593), at fos. 200^v–202^r.

¹⁴² HHStA, Türkei I, box 92, bundle for 1609, fos. 240^r–242^v ('Extract aus deß Freyherrns von Herbersteins, als *Deputirten Oratoris* an die Ottomanisch[en] Porten, *Relation*, welcher den 6. May [1]608 von Wien aufgebrochen', [end of 1609]), at fo. 240^v; fos. 243^r–263^v ('Adam Freyherrn zue Herberstein, höchstgedachter khönig[licher] May[estäts] Rath, Camerer, unnd *Deputiertenr Oratorn* an die Ottomanisch[en] Portten, unnd *Johan Rimaj* seines *Adiuncten* gehorsambist und underthenigste *Relation*', [end of 1609]), at fo. 248^r–249^v. On White's concept, see his 'Fetva Diplomacy: The Ottoman *Şeyhülislam* as Trans-Imperial Intermediary', in Gelder and Krstić (eds), 'Cross-Confessional Diplomacy', 199–221.

1593 to take up his post as *kadı* (judge) of Cairo.¹⁴³ On the whole, therefore, the ambivalence which Christian-European states displayed towards 'their' renegades was part of the pragmatism explicitly condoned by the emerging idea of reason of state which puts the pursuit of the ruler's interests above ethical and moral concerns.

¹⁴³ HHStA, Türkei I, box 80, bundle for 1593 Mar.–Apr., fos. 140^r–143^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 23 Apr. 1593, enciphered), fo. 142^{r-v}; bundle for 1593 May–June, fos. 2^r–8^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 2 May 1593), at fos. 2^v–5^r; fos. 27^r–30^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 4 May 1593), at fos. 28^v–29^r; fos. 39^r–41^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 12 May 1593, enciphered), at fo. 39^r; fos. 46^r–49^v (Kreckwitz to Matthias, Constantinople, 17 May 1593, enciphered), at fo. 47^r; KA, AFA, box 32, file 1593/6/¼, unfoliated (Matthias to Emperor Rudolf II, Vienna, 11 June 1593), at leaves 3^v–4^r.

Conclusion

This book has been an effort to reorient the scholarly discussion of renegades. So far the latter has been dominated by historians of Europe who have tended to concentrate on the exceptionality of these figures from a Christian-European point of view. Such men—and, with few exceptions, the focus has been overwhelmingly on men—embraced a faith which their former coreligionists considered the very antithesis to their own and put their knowledge, skills, and talents at the disposal of a dynasty whose success in the battlefield threatened the continued existence of Christendom as a political space dominated by Christianity. In addition, the power and wealth which many of them acquired was beyond anything to which most of their former compatriots could ever aspire. This is true not only of commoners but often applied to members of the nobility as well. The example of the Cigala brothers Scipione (Cigalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa) and Carlo is a case in point. Even though both were, of course, of noble birth and even though Carlo acquired fantastic riches as well as further titles, notably that of a count in the Holy Roman Empire and a prince in Calabria, he did not even come close to the prestige, power, wealth, and influence amassed by Cigalazade who, for several decades, occupied key positions in the Ottoman Empire, sat on the main decision-making body (the *divan-i hümayun*), and was tied to the dynasty through his two marriages to great-granddaughters of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent. As a consequence of this focus on exceptionality in scholarship, the place of renegades both in the Ottoman elite and in relations between the Ottoman Empire and Christian Europe have been repeatedly misunderstood. They were far from the secret to Ottoman success implied by earlier generations of historians.¹ Instead, renegades were at once evidence of the deep interconnections and entanglements of Christian Europe and the Ottoman Empire as well as constituent elements thereof.²

Even as the numerical presence of converts to Islam from Christian Europe in the Ottoman military-administrative elite diminished—first because of recruitment from domestic Christian communities through the *devşirme*, then, from the late

¹ For instance, Bernard Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe* (pbk edn, London: Phoenix, 2000), 223–7; Stephen Clissold, 'Christian Renegades and Barbary Corsairs', *History Today*, 26 (1976), 512. Contrast, in particular, Gábor Ágoston, *Guns for the Sultan: Military Power and the Weapons Industry in the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: CUP, 2005), 6–13, 56.

² See also Tobias P. Graf, 'Of Half-Lives and Double-Lives: Christian-European "Renegades" in the Ottoman Empire and Their Pre-Conversion Ties, ca. 1580–1610', in Pascal W. Farges et al. (eds), *Well-Connected Domains: Towards an Entangled Ottoman History* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 57; Leiden: Brill 2014), 132.

sixteenth century onward, as a result of the increasing admission of born Muslims to its ranks—their continued importance was a logical consequence of the very mechanisms by which the early Ottoman sultans had sought to counterbalance and erode the power base of the Turkic frontier *beys* who had driven the Empire's initial phase of expansion. The new troops which came to be known as the janissaries (*yeniçeri*) were, after all, raised from captives and slaves who, by definition, hailed from outside the Ottoman realm. In creating this institution, the Ottomans followed the Islamicate models which they had inherited from the 'Abbasid caliphs and Iberian 'Umayyads via the Seljuks, to say nothing of the Egyptian Mamluks in whose realm even the office of the ruler was vested in foreign slaves. Historically speaking, therefore, the integration of geographic and religious outsiders by conversion and acculturation into the elite and their investment with vital positions in the military and government has been a long-standing feature, if not an integral element, of the historical model of Islamic statehood.³

In light of the lingering effects of nationalism as well as the long-standing uneasiness with outsiders (and those who are descended from them) in many parts of Europe, the integrative power of the Ottoman elite is truly impressive. It is reflected not least in the fact that Christian Europeans became virtually unrecognizable as foreigners. They were given the same names, underwent the same training, and followed the same career paths as other members of the Ottoman elite who, until at least the seventeenth century, were themselves predominantly of non-Muslim origins. In the same vein, their socialization within the Ottoman elite as well as their continued attachments to their families outside the Empire merely extended well-established patterns. On the whole, therefore, Christian-European converts to Islam simply blended in. In this context it is revealing that in the mid-seventeenth century, the Ottoman historian Katib Çelebi only considered Cigalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa's foreign origins worthy of report because he 'was the son of Cigala who was a European captain and his mother had become a slave while she was the daughter of the guard of the Nova Castle [Castelnuovo (Herceg Novi)] and had converted to Christianity'. Indeed, the pre-conversion history of this particular *kapudan paşa* (admiral) received surprisingly detailed treatment, given that Ottoman texts, including this one, otherwise have very little to say on these matters. Thus Katib did not devote even a single word to the Italian origins of Cigalazade's predecessors Uluç Ali Paşa and Uluç Hasan Paşa, even though these had been equally well known to their contemporaries. Perhaps this knowledge had been lost

³ Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age, 1300–1600*, tr. Norman Itzkowitz and Colin Imber (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973), 77–8; Metin İ. Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550–1650* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 32; Patricia Crone, *Slaves on Horses: The Evolution of the Islamic Polity* (Cambridge: CUP, 1980), ch. 10; Basilike D. Papoulia, *Ursprung und Wesen der 'Knabenlese' im osmanischen Reich* (Südosteuropäische Arbeiten, 59; Munich: Oldenbourg, 1963), 12–23; Norman Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire and Islamic Tradition* (pbk edn, Chicago, IL: UCP, 1980), 49; Rhoads Murphy, 'Yeñi Çeri', in *EF*, vol. xi (2002), p. 322; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300–1650: The Structure of Power* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 130–1; Godfrey Goodwin, *The Janissaries* (pbk edn, London: Saqi Books, 2006), 42–3.

by the time Katib penned his work.⁴ Presumably, Cığalazade's origins continued to matter even after his death because of his noble background and because he had entered the Ottoman elite through the palace in Istanbul. Perhaps the memory was actively kept alive by the renegade's descendants. Uluç Ali and Uluç Hasan, in contrast, seem to have fathered no children and had in any case not only been of much humbler origins but were also products of the peculiar milieu of Barbary corsairing and piracy. By the time they came to Istanbul's attention, in spite of their telling *nisbes* (epithets), the perception of their Italian roots had become largely irrelevant to the Ottoman state and the majority of the military-administrative elite, even if they had clearly not been wholly effaced. What must have mattered more were their extensive Mediterranean connections. But there was also precedent for this kind of selective memory from the mid-fifteenth century in the mismatch between express acknowledgement of Hersekzade Ahmed Paşa's descent from a Bosnian duke and the attempt to play down, if not wholly erase, the knowledge of Mesih and Has Murad Paşas' close relations to the recently defeated Byzantine emperor.⁵

Of course, such integration demanded a price in the form of conversion to Islam and a cultural transformation designed to efface two of the most immediately obvious markers of foreignness: names and clothing styles. Converts thus were made to adapt to an Ottoman core culture which served to weld a motley array of people into a group with a strong esprit de corps, intended not to exclude new arrivals, but to absorb them in a more or less well-ordered manner. After all, being an 'outsider' by origin was a key feature of membership in the Ottoman elite.⁶

To reiterate the theoretical position: upon conversion to Islam, a European Christian or Jew embraced not only a new faith but also a new political identity as a subject of the Ottoman sultan. In this context, Ottomans as well as Christian Europeans regarded the act of conversion as a marker of political loyalty. For Christian-European observers, in whose eyes the convert was an apostate, the individual in question withdrew his loyalty at once from the community, its values, and beliefs, as well as the respective political ruler who was pledged to protecting them. From the point of view of his new coreligionists, on the other hand, conversion to Islam was not merely an act of admission into the community of believers, but also, in the case of the Ottoman Empire, a declaration of loyalty to

⁴ Kâtib Çelebi, *The Gift to the Great Ones on Naval Campaigns*, ed. İdris Bostan, tr. Uzman Tercüme Ltd Şti. (Ankara: Prime Ministry Undersecretariat for Maritime Affairs, 2008), 114–15, 138, quotation from p. 115.

⁵ Heath W. Lowry, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State* (SUNY Series in the Social and Economic History of the Middle East; Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2003), 127.

⁶ Compare Cemal Kafadar, 'A Rome of One's Own: Reflections on Cultural Geography and Identity in the Lands of Rum', *Muqarnas*, 24 (2007), 11, 14. This observation is influenced in part by a renewed discussion about a 'German core culture' in light of the integrative challenges posed by the arrival of large numbers of refugees from regions once part of the Ottoman Empire. See esp. Tina Hassel, 'Gesellschaft ändert sich, Grundwerte nicht', *tagesschau.de*, 1 Oct. 2015, <<http://www.tagesschau.de/kommentar/fluechtlingspolitik-deutschland-105.html>>, accessed 22 Feb. 2016, esp. under 'Startup-Paket für deutsche Werte'. My comment should not be mistaken as a suggestion that Europe should adopt the Ottoman model of integration involving religious conversion and outward transformation.

the Ottoman sultan. Consequently, both sides understood what was expressed in religious terms, and therefore theoretically a spiritual affair, as a changing of sides.

In spite of the theoretical irreversibility of conversion to Islam, which the prescription of the death penalty in Islamic and Ottoman law for unrepentant male apostates sought to enforce, even Ottoman writers realized that declarations of loyalty might be withdrawn or, at least, that newly declared loyalties might coexist with, rather than supersede, previous ties. It was for this reason that Mustafa Ali advised to employ those who had recently joined the Ottoman cause 'on the very opposite side in relation to the border they have quitted so that for some time they may not exchange news [with their people] and in order not to cause those who were befallen by the insanity of youthful spontaneity to repent and go back'.⁷ Although Ali may have had former Safavid subjects in mind when writing these lines for his *Counsel for Sultans*, his advice for caution would have been just as applicable to Christian Europeans, as, for example, the involvement of renegades in the Austrian-Habsburg intelligence organization in Istanbul discussed in Chapter 5 illustrates.

It is doubtful, however, whether the sultan would really have had an interest in allowing 'his' renegades to sever all ties to their former homes in this way. Although Cığalazade's initial provincial employments in the Ottoman East seem to prefigure Ali's advice, other cases point to the deliberate employment of Christian Europeans in positions in which their familiarity with and contacts in non-Ottoman lands were put to good use. In addition to the series of Italian-born *kapudan paşas*, the most striking example of this certainly is the Transylvanian-born İbrahim Bey (Pal Márkházy) who, soon after having embraced Islam, was sent to the border with the vassal principality which he had just left. Others include those renegades who, like Mahmud Bey (Sebold von Pibrach) and Ali Bey (Melchior von Tierberg), became interpreters, perhaps not least since prolonged isolation from compatriots would have endangered the usefulness of their language skills if they deteriorated by lack of practice. That this was a serious danger is evident from the fact that although Uluç Ali Paşa and Cığalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa were still able to speak Italian at the zenith of their careers, after several decades in Ottoman service, they apparently did not retain the fluency of native speakers.⁸ Even so, continued contacts with their former homes and compatriots often provided such renegades and their patrons with useful channels for informal diplomacy and valuable sources of information which could be harnessed in the formulation and execution of policy as well as, crucially, the factional struggles over policy and appointments. The latter

⁷ *Mustafâ 'Âlî's Counsel for Sultans of 1581*, ed. and tr. Andreas Tietze, 2 vols (Forschungen zur islamischen Philologie und Kulturgeschichte, 6–7; Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1979–82), i.62.

⁸ Emilio Sola Castaño, *Uchali: El Calabrés Tiñoso, o el mito del corsario muladí en la frontera* (Barcelona: Edicions Bellaterra, 2010), 68, 336; Emrah Safa Gürkan, 'My Money or Your Life: The Habsburg Hunt for Uluç Ali', *Studia Historica: Historia Moderna*, 36 (2014), 127 n. 16; Ilario Rinieri, 'Clemente VIII e Sinan Bassà Cicala: Secondo documenti inediti', pt 3, *La Civiltà Cattolica*, series 16, 10/1125 (20 Apr. 1897), 274–5 (Cığalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa to Lucrezia Cigala, off the coast of Messina, 20 Sept. 1598).

is exemplified clearly by the defection of Ladislaus Mört (Ali Bey), his involvement in the search of incriminating papers in the Imperial embassy, and his collusion in fabricating disinformation in support of Grand Vizier Koca Sinan Paşa's aims at the eve of the Long War between the Ottomans and the Austrian Habsburgs.⁹ Once again, the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Ottomans drew on the precedent set by the incorporation of the Byzantine and Balkan nobilities into the ranks of their own military-administrative elite.¹⁰

While Christian-European converts to Islam were often a welcome addition to the Ottoman military-administrative elite, they generally presented a particular challenge to Christian Europe. Valuable skills and privileged access to information which might undermine the security, military strategy, and tactics of Christian-European states were an important aspect of this, but the symbolic challenge was no less important. For a community which defined itself largely in terms of being in possession of the one divine truth, the allure of the Ottoman Empire and the conversion of a sizeable number of individuals to a faith regarded, at best, as heresy, was seriously threatening. The fact that the Christian god did not appear to punish these apostates, but instead allowed them to prosper bore the danger that Christians might come to the conclusion that not Christianity, but Islam was in fact the one true religion ordained by God.¹¹ Particularly as a consequence of the internal divisions in Christianity brought about by the Reformations (the plural is deliberate here), the issue of the right path towards salvation was regarded not merely as a private and individual spiritual matter, but a communal affair in which most early modern states, their rulers, and their elites were invested heavily. Religious adherence was a political issue, embodied most clearly in the principle of *cuius regio, eius religio* established in the Holy Roman Empire by the Religious Peace of Augsburg in 1555.

This was true also of the Ottoman Empire which itself experienced processes that closely resemble the confessionalization of parts of Christian Europe. Unlike in German principalities, however, comparable measures here targeted the Empire's Muslim subjects rather than society as a whole. Even here, the overwhelming focus lay on the military-administrative elite. That the Ottoman sultans ruled over an empire and not a territorial state in itself imposed severe limits on the state's ability to enforce religious uniformity on all its subjects. As Karen Barkey has argued, moreover, since the longevity of empires essentially rests on their effectiveness in managing difference rather than erasing it, attempts to turn the sultan's domains

⁹ See also Emrah Safa Gürkan, 'Fooling the Sultan: Information, Decision-Making and the "Mediterranean Faction" (1585–1587)', *Osmanlı Araştırmaları/Journal of Ottoman Studies*, 45 (2015), 57–96; Elif Özgen, 'The Connected World of Intrigues: The Disgrace of Murad III's Favourite David Passi in 1591', *Leidschrift*, 27 (2012), 75–100.

¹⁰ Lowry, *Nature*, ch. 7.

¹¹ Nabil I. Matar, *Islam in Britain, 1558–1685* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), 51–2; Winfried Schulze, *Reich und Türkegefahr im späten 16. Jahrhundert: Studien zu den politischen und gesellschaftlichen Auswirkungen einer äußeren Bedrohung* (Munich: Beck, 1978), 58–60; Lucia Rostagno, *Mi faccio turco: Esperienze ed immagini dell'islam nell'Italia moderna (Oriente Moderno, supplement no. 1; Studi e materiali sulla conoscenza dell'oriente in Italia, 4; Rome: Istituto per l'orientale C. A. Nallino, 1983), 78.*

into a monoconfessional space were rather unattractive.¹² Even when the Ottoman state did clamp down on 'heretics' and their followers, it did so not merely out of a concern for the enforcement of orthodoxy for orthodoxy's sake, but in order to eliminate the challenges to Ottoman political power which such deviations from Ottoman Sunni Islam implied. The *kızılbaşs*, for instance, were persecuted because their Shi'ite theology placed them closer to the likewise Shi'ite Safavids than the Sunni Ottoman dynasty, casting doubts on their political loyalties. Since the imperial rivalry between the two houses was expressed in religious terms as a struggle over the true form of Islam, the *kızılbaşs* were relatively easily denounced as traitors. Their geographic concentration in Eastern Anatolia and thus a politically and militarily sensitive area in the immediate vicinity of the contested Ottoman–Safavid border, moreover, further fuelled suspicions of their disloyalty and increased the fear that they actively supported the Ottomans' rivals, in the process undermining public order as well as the Ottoman war effort. Elsewhere in the Empire, other Islamic movements, particularly those which had crystallized around the charismatic figures of self-proclaimed messiahs (Mahdi), often sparked open rebellions because their leaders questioned the legitimacy of the Ottoman sultan, particularly in his role as caliph and thus the defender of Sunni 'right belief'.¹³ Selim I first claimed this title which implied the political as well as the spiritual leadership over the entire community of believers (*umma*) after having conquered the holy cities of Mecca and Medina from the Mamluks and it remained an important element in the legitimization of Ottoman rule under his successors.¹⁴ The close connection between following the 'correct' form of Islam—significantly

¹² Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: CUP, 2008), esp. 122–3.

¹³ Markus Dressler, 'Inventing Orthodoxy: Competing Claims for Authority and Legitimacy in the Ottoman–Safavid Conflict', in Hakan T. Karateke and Maurus Reinkowski (eds), *Legitimizing the Order: The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power* (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, 34; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 151–6; Nabil al-Tikriti, 'Kalam in the Service of the State: Apostasy and the Defining of Ottoman Islamic Identity', in Karateke and Reinkowski (eds), *Legitimizing the Order*, 136–48; Gilles Veinstein, 'Religious Institutions, Policies and Lives', in Suraiya N. Faruqi and Kate Fleet (eds), *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, ii: *The Ottoman Empire as a World Power, 1453–1603* (Cambridge: CUP, 2013), 338–47; Markus Koller, 'Verfolgungen von Häretikern im Osmanischen Reich—der Sultan als Verteidiger des sunnitischen Islam (15.–16. Jahrhundert)', in Eckhard Leuschner and Thomas Wunsch (eds), *Das Bild des Feindes: Konstruktion von Antagonismen und Kulturtransfer im Zeitalter der Türkenkriege; Ostmitteleuropa, Italien und Osmanisches Reich* (Berlin: Mann, 2013), 267–82; Tijana Krstić, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Stanford, CA: SUP, 2011), 80–2, 106–8, 167–8; Krstić, 'Illuminated by the Light of Islam and the Glory of the Ottoman Sultanate: Self-Narratives of Conversion to Islam in the Age of Confessionalization', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 51 (2009), 40, 50–3; Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, ch. 5.

¹⁴ Veinstein, 'Religious Institutions', 347–9, 354; Colin Imber, 'Ideals and Legitimation in Early Ottoman History', in Metin İ. Kunt and Christine Woodhead (eds), *Süleyman the Magnificent and His Age: The Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern World* (Harlow: Longman, 1995), 152–3; Imber, 'Süleyman as Caliph of the Muslims: Ebû's-Su'ûd's Formulation of Ottoman Dynastic Ideology', in Gilles Veinstein (ed.), *Soliman le Magnifique et son temps: Actes du colloque de Paris, Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, 7–10 mars 1990* (Rencontres de l'Ecole du Louvre, 9; Paris: Ecole du Louvre, 1992), 179–84; Imber, 'Frozen Legitimacy', in Karateke and Reinkowski (eds), *Legitimizing the Order*, 106; Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 125–6; Hakan T. Karateke, 'Legitimizing the Ottoman Sultanate: A Framework for Historical Analysis', in Karateke and Reinkowski (eds), *Legitimizing the Order*, 25–31.

determined not just by doctrinal orthodoxy, but perhaps even more importantly by observing Ottoman Sunni orthopraxy—and political loyalty to the sultan which resulted from the assumption of the caliphate is a key component of confessiona-lization. This link provided the justification for the Ottoman state to increasingly involve itself in questions of faith while, at the same time, endowing its imperial conflicts, especially those with the Safavids, with a strong religious dimension. To be sure, the Ottomans were often very tolerant of deviant religious positions, but only as long as they challenged neither the Ottoman sultan nor the preferred brand of Sunni Islam.

The experience and activities of individual converts like Murad Bey (Balasz Somlyai) and Ladislaus Mörth demonstrate that the Ottoman Empire and Christian Europe inhabited a space of shared sensibilities of religious and confessional polarization. Murad Bey and others actively engaged in the discourse over which belief represented the truth not just—not even primarily—with other Muslims, but more importantly with Christians—and Christians from their former homes rather than the Ottoman Empire at that. This focus of course reflects the concerns and experiences of the converts in question who, more often than not, would have been thoroughly unfamiliar with the specifics of the different varieties of Christianity predominant among Ottoman Christians. Yet even while Murad's extensive discussion of Christology in his *Guide for One's Turning towards God* owed much to the Unitarian convictions he had embraced prior to his conversion to Islam, they also reflected Islam's own perception of the relationship between itself and the religions of the book. This relationship was closer to that of rival confessions than of completely different religions.¹⁵

From a Muslim point of view the conversion of all 'infidels' to Islam is desirable and the eventual achievement of this goal perhaps even a foregone conclusion, at least on a cosmic time scale. There can be little doubt that Ottoman Muslims, by and large, shared such an outlook.¹⁶ However, conversion had a particular political relevance only if and when it was connected to admission into the Empire's military-administrative elite of whom the sultan understandably required a particular measure of loyalty. At the level of the *re'aya*, the sultan's ordinary subjects, it mattered remarkably little to the Ottoman state whether people were Muslims or non-Muslims, except in so far as this affected taxation and the dispensation of justice.¹⁷ Nominally, at least, as long as Ottoman Christians and Jews, as *zimmis*,

¹⁵ Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 85–6, 105; Krstić, 'Illuminated by the Light of Islam', 46–50; Yohanan Friedmann, *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam: Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition* (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), ch. 1. Compare also the personal anecdote recounted in Marc David Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam: Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 3–4.

¹⁶ Maurus Reinkowski, 'Hidden Believers, Hidden Apostates: The Phenomenon of Crypto-Jews and Crypto-Christians in the Middle East', in Dennis C. Washburn and A. Kevin Reinhart (eds), *Converting Cultures: Religion, Ideology and Transformations of Modernity* (Social Sciences in Asia, 14; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 427.

¹⁷ Baki Tezcan, 'Ethnicity, Race, Religion and Social Class: Ottoman Markers of Difference', in Christine Woodhead (ed.), *The Ottoman World* (The Routledge Worlds; London: Routledge, 2012), 161, 165–7.

paid their taxes and kept quiet, their religious beliefs were not regarded as a challenge to the sultan's authority. On the contrary, the payment of the poll tax (*cizye*) was construed as an acknowledgement of Muslim political authority as well as the superiority of Islam.¹⁸ Even though relations between the various religious communities in the Ottoman Empire were naturally not free of conflict, religious rivalries with European Christians were accorded greater urgency since Christian-European states (and churches) on the whole presented a religious as well as a political challenge to the supremacy of the Ottoman dynasty. This challenge had to be met for reasons of self-preservation as well as imperial expansion and endowed the confessional struggle with Christians outside the Empire with a different significance from the Ottomans' relationship with their own non-Muslim subjects.

For its part, the example of Ladislaus Mörtz shows that the same strategies developed by Christian Europeans for navigating the confessional divisions between Catholicism and Protestantism were applicable to their new Ottoman surroundings. Loyalty to the monarch was declared and made manifest by adopting his (or her) faith since, in Ottoman as well as Christian-European eyes, the two were so closely connected as to be virtually interchangeable. That this association could be effectively undermined either by dissimulation or genuine religious indifference is less important in this context than the fact that such behaviour at least outwardly confirmed the hegemonic status of the ruler's creed and thus paradoxically, if superficially, reinforced the religious homogenization aspired to by confessionalization, particularly as far as office-holding elites were concerned. In its insistence to staff positions of state only with Sunni Muslims, the sultan's service differed little from most of its Christian-European counterparts. In the final version of his testament drawn up in 1554, Emperor Ferdinand I enjoined his sons, whenever possible, to do all in their power to appoint to high offices only those 'who adhere to the religion and order of our old and general [i.e. Catholic] Christian and Roman Church'. A little over a century later, the 'Great' Friedrich I of Prussia, in his testament of 1667, likewise required his son and successor to give offices of state only to followers of the 'Reformed Religion' (i.e. Calvinism): 'if there are no [suitable Calvinists] in the Electorate of Brandenburg, hire some from outside the territory and give preference to them above the Lutherans.' For Friedrich, even being a Protestant was not enough; one had to be the right *kind* of Protestant. And being the right kinds of Protestants, foreigners were considered more trustworthy, reliable, and loyal than the prince's own subjects of different creeds.¹⁹

¹⁸ C. Cahen, Halil İnalçık, and P. Hardy, 'Djizya', in *EP*, vol. ii (1965), esp. p. 559; C. Cahen, 'Dhimma', in *EP*, vol. ii (1965), p. 227.

¹⁹ HHStA, Familienurkunden, Film 007, no. 1319/1 (third testament of Emperor Ferdinand I, Vienna, 25 Feb. 1554), at fo. 9r; Georg Küntzel and Martin Hass (eds), *Die politischen Testamente der Hohenzollern nebst ergänzenden Aktenstücken*, 2 vols (Quellensammlung zur Deutschen Geschichte; Leipzig: Teubner, 1911), i.44. On princely testaments as a medium of intergenerational communication, see Susan Richter, *Fürstentestamente der Frühen Neuzeit: Politische Programme und Medien intergenerationaler Kommunikation* (Schriftenreihe der Historischen Kommission bei der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 80; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2009).

Even though the rhetoric of confessionalization as well as that of alterity and treachery would suggest that Christian Europeans shunned those who had 'turned Turk', both their families and their former rulers generally dealt with them pragmatically. For both, such individuals could be allies and a resource to be mobilized in the pursuit of their own interests. In the case of Italian, especially Venetian, families, continued contacts by correspondence and mutual visits are well attested to. In the process, several families developed trans-imperial family strategies which, like Carlo Cigala's oscillations between the Spanish crown and the Ottoman sultan, in both cases involving or at least invoking his renegade brother Cigalazade Yusuf Sinan Paşa, display close parallels to the strategies employed by Jewish and *converso* families like the Pallaches. More than this, Christian-European rulers and diplomats treated Christian-European converts like Gazanfer Ağa, Mahmud Bey, and Adam Neuser (Mustafa Bey) with the same ambivalence they showed towards influential Jewish favourites like Joseph Nasi, David Passi, and Solomon Ashkenazi. They were at once dismissed and disdained because of their religious beliefs and coveted as allies, partners, and sources of information. The Imperial ambassador David Ungnad's change of opinion towards Markus Penckner illustrates the dramatic shift which, at times, could be rather sudden. While he had strongly advised against hiring Penckner as an interpreter and intelligence agent in June 1575, by December he had begun to accept him as an evidently valuable source—so much so, in fact, that the man's services were passed on to his successors. The principles espoused in anti-Ottoman Christian-European rhetoric, it seems, were intended exclusively for home consumption in an attempt to rally the community behind the faith and the political authorities sworn to protect its dominance and deter fellow Christians from turning to the Ottoman Empire. In 'international' relations, however, the pragmatic pursuit of the emerging idea of reason of state ruled the day. Even then, and even for Christian-European states, renegades did not matter so much as *renegades* than for the positions they held, the contacts they had, the skills they commanded, and the access to valuable information which they possessed.

Neither for the Ottomans nor for Christian-European governments did renegades have a monopoly on either of these domains. Especially when they needed intermediaries (or intelligence agents), Ottoman officials and Christian-European diplomats alike were ready to make use of anyone deemed suitable for the job, be they converts to Islam like Mahmud Bey and Hasan Calabrese, Ottoman Muslims like Şeyhülislam Hoca-Sadüddinzade Mehmed Efendi and the *kadı* (judge) Maruf Efendi, Ottoman Christians like Benedetto Bruti and Matthia del Faro, or Ottoman Jews like David Passi and Solomon Ashkenazi. For the Ottomans, the main advantage of renegades over other groups perhaps was that their conversion was expected to render them loyal and faithful to the sultan alone so that they could be given direct charge of offices in the military and the administration in a way which was mostly closed to non-Muslims by the second half of the sixteenth century. For the same reasons, such individuals could be attractive partners to Christian Europeans since these positions enabled them to directly influence Ottoman politics as well as the making of policy and its execution, to say nothing of their privileged access to valuable information.

In the end, the differences in the treatment of these Christian-European converts between Ottoman and Christian-European sources show that the presence of Christian-European converts *as* Christian-European converts—rather than their individual talents and connections—mattered most to their former compatriots and coreligionists who moved back and forth between condemning their treachery and seeking their help. The preceding pages have highlighted the extent to which renegades themselves catered to this ambivalence. But they also genuinely shared in it. In this light, there is no better way to conclude this book than by recalling Markus Penckner's words sent to his friend in Poland a few months after his conversion to Islam: 'Although I am where I am, I am still yours.'²⁰

²⁰ HHStA, Polen I, box 84, fos. 112^r–113^v (Markus Penckner to Markus Gerber, Constantinople, 23 Mar. 1573), at fo. 112^r.

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